

A MISSION OF PEACE

EVANGELISTIC TRIUMPHS
IN SOUTH AFRICA



GIPSY SMITH

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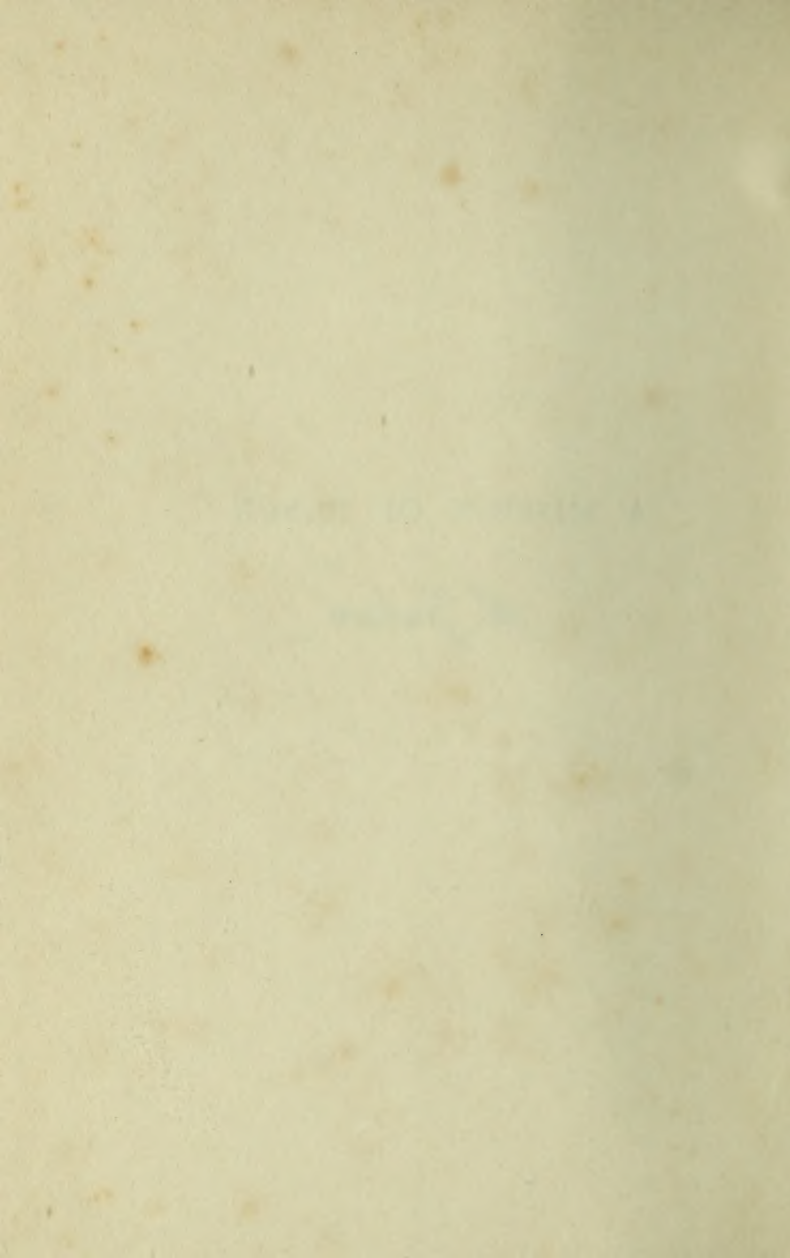



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A MISSION OF PEACE

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"THE MISSION PARTY" AT END OF RAILWAY CAR (TAKEN
AT MODDER RIVER).

A MISSION
OF PEACE
EVANGELISTIC TRIUMPHS
IN SOUTH AFRICA 1904

BY

GIPSY SMITH

LONDON: NATIONAL COUNCIL OF EVANGELICAL FREE
CHURCHES. THOMAS LAW, MEMORIAL HALL, E.C.

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P R E F A C E

I SHALL always look back upon my mission in South Africa with thankfulness and joy. This little record of it was prepared, at the request of Mr. Law and many friends, from notes hastily made during the scanty leisure of the tour. I have never claimed to be a practised author, and there has been no attempt at polished phrases or studied eloquence. I claim no other merit than a longing desire to honour and glorify God, Who permitted me to be the channel of so much blessing to Boers and British in that far-away land.

May the story inspire in the hearts of those who read an apostolic faith in the Gospel, and its mighty power to save to the uttermost.

GIPSY SMITH.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE INVITATION	1
II. THE OUTWARD VOYAGE	12
III. THE FIRST MISSION—CAPE TOWN	20
IV. THE DIAMOND CITY	36
V. THE WORK AT BLOEMFONTEIN	55
VI. THE GOLDEN CITY	62
VII. FROM KAFFIRS TO GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS	81
VIII. THE GARDEN OF SOUTH AFRICA	89
IX. OFFENDING THE LIQUOR INTERESTS	99
X. GOSPEL TEMPERANCE WORK AT EAST LONDON	119
XI. PORT ELIZABETH	138
XII. FAREWELL TO SOUTH AFRICA	161
XIII. RETROSPECT	176

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	TO	FACE	PAGE
"THE MISSION PARTY" AT END OF RAILWAY CAR (TAKEN AT MODDER RIVER) . . .	<i>Frontispiece</i>		
"SEND-OFF" AT SOUTHAMPTON			12
R.M.S. "SAXON" LEAVING SOUTHAMPTON			16
TABLE MOUNTAIN AND HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT, CAPE TOWN			16
THE MISSION EXECUTIVE, CAPE TOWN			20
DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH, STELLENBOSCH, FIRST DUTCH CHURCH IN WHICH I PREACHED			24
PROFESSOR HOFMEYR			24
IN THE DE BEERS COMPOUND, KIMBERLEY			40
KAFFIR KRAAL			40
THE CAKE AWARDED ME AT CAPE TOWN. (BY THE SOUTH AFRICAN <i>OWL</i>)			48
IN THE DE BEERS COMPOUND, KIMBERLEY			48
BLOEMFONTEIN			56
MARKET PLACE, JOHANNESBURG			62

X LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	TO FACE PAGE
INTERIOR OF GOLD BATTERY, JOHANNESBURG	64
INTERIOR OF A GOLD MINE	64
MISSION COMMITTEE, JOHANNESBURG	72
THE MISSION TENT USED AT JOHANNESBURG AND PRETORIA	80
KAFFIR WAR DANCE	82
DRIVING TO NATIVE LOCATIONS	82
PRETORIA	86
TOWN HALL, DURBAN	96
TOWN HALL, PIETERMARITZBURG	96
TWO MODES OF LOCOMOTION—	
JINRICKSHA	112
TROLLEY CAR ON RAILWAY	112
MYSELF AND WIFE AT PRETORIA, DRIVING WITH A GRANDDAUGHTER OF AN OLD FRIEND	128
CHILDREN'S MEETING, PORT ELIZABETH	144
DURBAN	144
JOHANNESBURG CYCLE BRIGADE ADVERTISING THE MISSION	160
INTERIOR OF TENT USED FOR THE MISSIONS AT JOHAN- NESBURG AND PRETORIA	168

A MISSION OF PEACE

CHAPTER I

THE INVITATION

WHILE conducting a mission in Cardiff, some years ago, a minister came to see me at the close of one of the meetings, asking if I would go to South Africa to conduct an evangelistic campaign. I told him that if the Churches sent me a hearty and united invitation, and if my committee could so arrange matters, I would gladly go. Then followed a time of waiting. I often wondered who this brother could be, for no one whom I met in Cardiff seemed to know. I wanted to go to South Africa; I had thought of it for years, and really hoped that something would come out of that conversation.

There followed a little correspondence with

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one or two ministers in South Africa, but, strange to say, I heard no more from the one who first mentioned the matter to me, nor have I seen him since. Nothing very definite passed, and whatever might have taken place then was hindered and stopped by the outbreak of the war. During those dark days of heart-break and bloodshed, days in which the faith of the best was tested to its utmost, my visit was necessarily shelved, but was never finally abandoned. The day would come, many hoped, when such a mission, which was so much needed, would not only be possible, but be a glorious fact. When at last the red rain of blood ceased, and the sun of peace came out once more from behind the dark, angry storm clouds, God's workers sought most earnestly to gather their scattered forces, and the work of reconstruction was begun. Now, as never before, the need for a great spiritual revival was felt. The war had left behind it bitterness, hatred, hardness, indifference, sin, and scores and hundreds of backsliders, and the religious life had been nearly crushed out; altogether, the state of things was most discouraging.

Those who did care, and who were in living touch with Jesus Christ and His concerns conferred and prayed together. While they prayed, God again moved them to think of the wisdom of arranging a united mission on a scale such as South Africa had never before attempted. The more they prayed, the deeper grew the desire and the conviction that such an effort must be made. All the Nonconformist Churches were consulted, and finally agreed to unite in a great evangelistic campaign. They looked and prayed for two things—the quickened life of the Churches, and a great harvest of souls.

After much prayer and conference, the Churches sent a petition to the National Free Church Council of England, asking if Gipsy Smith might go over for six months. At first the Rev. Thomas Law thought that my going was out of the question, but offered to send them some one else. The ministers and laymen of Cape Town and Johannesburg would not take a refusal. They felt that they had been led and directed by God in their decision—first to hold the mission, and secondly as to the choice of their man; and they wrote again, urging their

request for Gipsy Smith, saying, "You must let him come ; our churches, our people, our country, all need him. Spare him to us for six months." The home council gave the matter their most prayerful consideration, and at length decided to let me go, for it was felt by the committee that the mission would be a source of strength and cheer to the brave men who were making such an honest attempt to bring the people of South Africa to God, and would bind the Churches of the two countries nearer to each other than anything else could do. It was not easy to get away, for I am most certainly not a labourer out of work. Mr. Law told me at the time my committee consented to my going, he had enough invitations on the table to keep me busy for four or five years ; yet, in spite of this, the National Council most generously gave me up for this special work. I mention this to show how fully the home leaders sympathize with our brethren across the seas, and desire to unite with them in the struggle to bring the world to the feet of our King.

The next few months were spent in making

the preliminary arrangements, such as fixing dates ; securing buildings—the best the country could give—the bringing of the Churches into complete sympathy and united action ; organizing choirs ; securing workers to visit from house to house ; advertising, and hundreds of little details, which are absolutely necessary to rouse a town, awaken its interest, arrest its attention, and compel it to think about God and the things of eternity. Meetings and circles for prayer were held all over the country. The religious papers and the daily papers kept the mission well before the minds of the people. For many months before it really began, some good people prayed till they could talk of nothing else but the “Gipsy Smith Mission.” Presently the mission was in the air ; the spirit of revival took hold of the people ; the fields were white unto harvest. Many felt and said they would have to be saved when the mission came. God was preparing the way, in answer to the thousands of prayers being offered on both sides of the sea. Everything was ready when I landed, so splendidly had the Churches worked.

All these months I was working at home ; the vast gatherings were brought into loving sympathy with me in my proposed visit to South Africa, and joined in prayer that God would send showers of blessing. Those who had loved ones in Africa were specially praying ; scores of letters reached me, telling of sons, fathers, brothers, and sisters, far from home and God, begging an interest in my thought and prayer. Boys and girls wrote telling me of absent fathers, hoping that I should meet them, and be made a blessing to them. One dear little girl wrote a very pathetic letter, saying her father ran away to Africa some years ago, and left her and her mother, and that they had not heard from him once. "We hope," she said, "that your words may reach him and bring him to Jesus and to us." Hundreds of such prayers were answered in the mission : the lost were found, the dead are alive again, hearts and homes have a new light shining in them—a light they have never known before. Life is worth living now to many to whom before it was existence, struggle, and even hell upon earth. God has worked again amongst men

miracles of grace. England and South Africa were joining hands, and hearts were made one at the throne of the heavenly grace. Never was anything attempted about which there was more earnest prayer, and it was believing prayer. We looked for great and pentecostal victories.

London gave us a magnificent send-off from Exeter Hall. Leeds followed, with the Coliseum crowded with over three thousand people. My dear old battlefield, Hanley, was not, and would not be, behind any town or city. The people there crowded the Victoria Hall to assure me of their abiding love and constant prayer upon my work. Cambridge—the town in which I was converted, and where I spent so much of my time when a boy, and now my home—in a fine meeting, with the Rev. Johnston Ross, M.A.; Rev. W. T. A. Barber, D.D., of The Leys, and the Rev. F. H. Benson, B.A., as speakers, bade me God-speed, and commended me, and the work of the mission, to that Power without which we can do nothing. Then came the final send-off at the National Free Church annual gatherings in Newcastle-on-Tyne, where the representatives of eight

millions of Free Churchmen sought to dedicate me to God for this special work.

Mr. J. Compton Rickett moved the following resolution :—

“The National Council of Evangelical Free Churches recognizes with devout thankfulness to the Great Head of the Church the abundant success which has attended the United Missions conducted by Gipsy Smith as a missionary of the council ; and it would, on the occasion of his visit to the councils of South Africa, most heartily commend him to the Churches of those councils, and would earnestly pray that the richest Divine blessing may accompany him, and that, as the result of the missions, there may be a great quickening of the spiritual life of the Churches, and an abundant in-gathering of souls. It would, further, express the hope that his visit may tend to stimulate and consolidate the general work of the councils in Africa.”

Rev. W. Bradfield, B.A., made a touching speech, for which I was very grateful. I give some extracts from the Free Church Year Book—

“I have had the honour of the private friendship of Gipsy Smith, and it has been no small thing to hear from him the secrets of the woodlands—how the

chaffinches build, and how the sap springs up in the trees and leaves marks on the bark. I had the honour of having his family as members of my Church. And the young lady to whose singing you listened last night was one of the staunchest and best workers I have, and we shall miss her very badly, when, with Gipsy Smith, she goes to South Africa. When I was a boy, W. G. Grace used to come to visit some friends in the village in which I lived. What delighted us as boys was that Grace was always willing to play in the village team. And more than that, if any boy was willing to stick up the stumps, W. G. Grace was willing to play with him. I have found the same kind of thing characteristic of Gipsy Smith. When he came to rest in my circuit, without invitation he came and gave me the strong and splendid help that he can give. And now we are sending him away, I cannot do it myself without some regret, some feeling of the loss it means; and I hope the South African Church will realize that we are sending the most precious thing we have in sending Gipsy Smith amongst them."

I shall never forget how the President—Rev. F. B. Meyer, B.A.—took my hand, and gave his little speech—

"God speed you, and make you even a greater blessing in Africa than you have been in your own

country. We thank God for the work you have done here. May the Lord bless you and keep you and cause His face to shine upon you. Tell the Churches of our order in South Africa that we send them our Christian love, that we have sympathized with them in the great sorrows through which they have passed. Tell them to apply the Sermon on the Mount to daily practical life. Tell them to cling to the Cross of Jesus Christ, and tell them that we are true in brotherhood to them through all the years. God speed you."

After this meeting, I knew God was with me, and would use me. I had no further misgivings, never a doubt. I was confident in God. I told my friends in my day-dreams I could see thousands coming to my Lord, and I was not surprised when they did come; indeed, I should have been surprised had they not come. My position was very strong and unassailable, for was I not sent with the confidence of my brethren? No man was ever better backed, or more lovingly committed to God. When I did reach my work, the power and force of eight millions of Christians behind me was felt and recognized everywhere. Letters from many friends reached me, expressing

the best wishes for this larger service, with the promise to remember me constantly before the Lord. One letter I must give ; it is from my dear friend Dr. McLaren, whose friendship has been one of the privileges of my life, and from whom I have gathered an inspiration which cannot be put into words.

" March 17, 1904.

" DEAR GIPSY,

" I see you start on Saturday, so I wish to have a good-bye shake of your hand in this fashion, and to signal my best wishes and prayers for you. God bless you and be with you.

" Yours affectionately,

" ALEXANDER McLAREN."

The whole story of this trip can never be told till the books are opened ; but, surely, here is enough to strengthen faith in God and His Gospel, to lead us all to greater consecration, to expect all along the line more definite and immediate results from the preaching of the Cross, and to wonder and be sad if there are no signs following.

CHAPTER II

THE OUTWARD VOYAGE

LEAVING Cambridge on Friday, March 18, we spent the night with an old friend, Mr. J. B. Wild, C.C., at Euston Square, London. When we reached Waterloo Station on Saturday, 19th, we soon found many very dear friends to say good-bye and to wish us God-speed. Amongst the number were friends from all over London, and some even from the provinces, and, of course, Rev. Thomas Law and his noble staff, who are always faithful. Some accompanied us to Southampton, and saw us safely on the *Saxon*; and as the time of departure drew near, there must have been quite fifteen hundred people, headed by their ministers, from the Free Churches of Southampton and Bournemouth, who, in the name



Photo by Miell & Miell.



[Photo by L. Wilkins.

"SEND-OFF" AT SOUTHAMPTON.

of thousands of friends all over the "dear old country," sang, "Crown Him Lord of all," "Count your blessings," "Showers of blessings," and "God be with you till we meet again." It was, indeed, for us—I speak for my wife and daughter—a most touching and tender experience, and one we cannot easily forget.

By this time the bell had rung the last of the friends off the ship, the train carrying the mail having arrived. It was most interesting to see how quickly the sixteen hundred bags and packages were brought on board. The last moment came, the gangways were lifted, "Let go!" was heard from the bridge, the ropes were all loosened, the first great throb of the engine was heard and felt, and steadily we moved from the dock; then a great shout, and a sheet of white pocket-handkerchiefs waved, and at last we were on our way to South Africa. We waved and watched till we could see no more of friends and home. The next hour or so we spent in reading telegrams and letters from all parts of the country to assure us of the constant remembrances at the "throne of

grace," and as we settled ourselves in the cabin for the night, we could not help thinking, "The sea is His, and He made it."

Sunday and Monday found us tossing on a troubled ocean, and as we are not the best possible sailors, we will pass over these days without any comment. Wednesday morning early found us up, looking for the enchanting island of Madeira. We landed and spent three or four hours in a most refreshing and enjoyable way after the tossing of the Bay of Biscay. Passengers to South Africa are glad to take advantage of the opportunity of going ashore and exploring the island of Madeira. At one time this was a very costly proceeding, owing to the manner in which boatmen, donkey-boys, and the motley crew of beggars overcharged, as they seemed to imagine they had a perfect right to do, the passing stranger. For some considerable time, however, there has been a great improvement in this respect, owing to a firm who issue to passengers on board all ships coupons, at an exclusive charge of eight shillings, for a properly organized trip. We decided to take these coupons. We were

conveyed to the shore in small boats ; then we had a ride in a light basket car, drawn by two bullocks, to the train ; thence to the top of the mountain, where, in the garden of the Mount Hotel, we breakfasted, two thousand feet above the sea. We looked round the Mount Church, and then came down the mountain in a toboggan, down a winding road which they told us was three miles in length. We made a tour of the market, and went round the public gardens. In this walk we were accompanied by a very loquacious guide ; he was never at a loss for a reply—what he did not know he quickly made up without any difficulty. A friend in the party asked if he knew Christopher Columbus. “Oh yes ! he stayed a month here.” Did he know General Booth, was the next question. “Of course ; he opened our new railway.” With this we let him off, he requesting particularly that we should notice his number, that we might look him up when we returned. He evidently liked the look of us !

Leaving Madeira at 12.30, we sailed away in sunshine and smooth water, which continued for the next week. A trip from Southampton

to Cape Town on one of the Union Castle boats is a very delightful experience, if one be a good sailor. We found many friends on board the good ship *Saxon*; every one was so kind and gracious, from Captain Reynolds and Chief Officer Mr. C. E. Stuart to every man of the crew. I never was on a boat where every man was so anxious to make the passengers so happy—especially the officers. I found the chief officer had sailed with me from Sydney to Vancouver, and, as we sat at the same table, we had many pleasant chats over old times.

What surprised me most was this. On Friday morning a deputation of ministers and passengers, headed by the Rev. Dr. Stewart, of Lovedale, South Africa, waited upon me, and said they came from captain, officers, passengers, and crew, requesting that I should preach on Sunday night. After some little reflection, I felt I ought not to say No to this unique opportunity. A notice was accordingly posted up in the three departments of the ship—first, second, and third—inviting everybody to the service, which was to be held at 8 p.m. The chief officer, who was most anxious to do



Photo by L. Wilkins]

[Bournemouth.

R.M.S. "SAXON" LEAVING SOUTHAMPTON.



TABLE MOUNTAIN AND HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT, CAPE TOWN.

everything in his power to make the service a success, kindly had the afterwell deck cleared, even to the removal of some cases of refractory cocks and hens who would insist on joining in the chorus ; awning above and around to keep the sound in ; a platform erected with an impromptu pulpit, covered entirely with the Union Jack. The ship band formed my organ, and the stewards and crew the choir.

The congregation was in many ways a notable one. It included General Sir and Lady Hildyard and many military men ; rich and poor ; those who were travelling at the call of their country, others in search of health ; some for pleasure, some in search of better times ; some going back to home and friends, others going to new scenes, not knowing what was before them ; and some, I fear, leaving home because they must. It seemed as if everybody were there, so the barman closed up and came too. We sang "Eternal Father, strong to save," "Jesu, lover of my soul," "Fight the good fight," and "Peace, perfect peace." Dr. Stewart opened with prayer. We could not sing "Count your blessings," because the

people did not know it, but *we had the collection* (which went to some sailors' charity), if we could not have the *collection hymn*. My daughter helped me sing "My Father knows," and I was helped to preach, and so closed a most remarkable service.

All the following week I was being sought out to speak to those who had in some way been interested by the Word spoken. When Sunday came round again, notice was put up that I would preach, for all took it for granted that I would. I dared not refuse, although the ship was rolling tremendously, and I could hardly keep my feet. However, we got through, and the service was more impressive than the one held the previous Sunday. Everybody came again who was not on duty or sick, and we felt it was good to be there.

Monday brought a good deal of excitement, for were we not to reach Cape Town in the morning? Many were busy packing under great difficulties, for the ship was rolling heavily. Most of us contented ourselves in our deck-chairs, meaning to be up early and pack when the ship once more got into still water. It was

the most wakeful night, I think, we had ; the motion of the boat was dreadful. Suddenly the screw slows, although quite dark ; then it stops, and, looking out of the porthole, we see lights, and after straining our eyes for some time, we see standing out against the sky the world-famed Table Mountain, and we knew at last we had reached the Cape.

CHAPTER III

THE FIRST MISSION—CAPE TOWN

CAPE TOWN is a magnificent spot, with its mountains—Table Mountain, “Lion’s Head,” “Twelve Apostles,” and “Devil’s Peak”—and the drive round the whole is one of the most wonderful in the world, so it is said, and I have never seen anything more grand and beautiful. Its streets, houses, shops, and public buildings all remind me of American and also a little of some of the Australian cities. A city of hotels, large and small, a great many boarding-houses and quaint bungalows—such is Cape Town. The people are made up of thousands of white people, British and Dutch, and thousands of coloured, of all shades. These for years have had one overwhelming passion—the making of money. Money and pleasure, drink, gambling,



THE MISSION EXECUTIVE, CAPE TOWN.

THE FIRST MISSION—CAPE TOWN 21

and lust stand out large in the lives of thousands of men in Cape Town, and I think it is safe to say all over the country. The Churches were largely divided—on one side stood the British, on the other side the Dutch. The war had left a bitterness that could be felt, but could not be put into words. Professed Christians, men who used to be friends, met in the street, but did not speak. I early saw that the racial difficulty was a big one ; patience, wisdom, and a deep spiritual revival in all the Churches would be needed in order to bring these peoples together into one Christian whole. This is the city, and such were its people to which we had been invited to preach the gospel of salvation and peace.

The Churches to which we had come were most anxious and ready to do anything in their power to bring about an aggressive work of grace. The Evangelical Church Council, ministers and laymen—this includes some of the most distinguished citizens—received us cordially. A reception was given to us at the hall of the Y.M.C.A. on the evening of April 11, to which two or three hundred of

the leaders of the Churches came to welcome us and bid us God-speed in our work, and also to pledge their whole-hearted support and co-operation. Large bouquets of flowers were given to my wife and daughter, and some nice little speeches were made, after which I had to reply, and before we closed, all who were present felt that the mission had already begun in our own hearts.

Soon after the reception I went to look at my "workshop." As in ordinary work, the best can be done under the best conditions. One of the great needs of South Africa is proper accommodation for great crowds. At Cape Town there is to be a town hall seating three thousand, but it is not yet finished. The only other likely building was the Dutch Reformed Church, and that was definitely and without hesitation refused us—such was the state of feeling before the mission. At last the committee obtained an old, deserted corrugated-iron building. A man called it "consecrated iron." We consecrated it. It was a very queer sort of place, but the committee faced the difficulties of the situation, and put the place in order at a

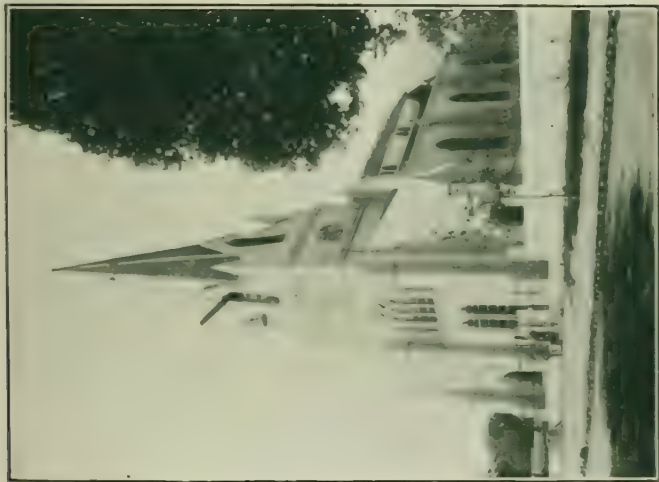
THE FIRST MISSION—CAPE TOWN 23

cost of seven or eight hundred pounds, so that when seated we could get into it three thousand people. A large flag, white centre with a red border, and my name, "Gipsy Smith," running through the middle, floated at the top in the breeze. While I was looking round, two young carpenters who had seen my photograph posted on the walls came up to me and said, "Please, sir, when do you open?" I said, "Saturday." Then they asked, "Any free passes, sir?" They thought it was a circus—and I don't know what they took me for. I said, "You go to that door every night and use my name, and ask for a front seat." And those young fellows came, and got blessing.

From the first meeting this building was packed, and hundreds turned away, eight or nine men to every one woman; *the men were in the majority even in the inquiry-room*. When this place was full it was a sight to witness—white and black, rich and poor, British and Dutch, Episcopal and Nonconformist sitting side by side, and here and there one could see a Malay, with his fez in his hand, listening like the rest. There was no difference; all had sinned, Christ

is the Saviour of all, and all were drinking in the blessed words of life. The Churches were being quickened; ministers were rejoicing in the time of harvest; the two races were coming together; friends separated by the war were friendly for the first time since that unhappy period. This was a time for the ministers as well as the people. Several ministers told me of brother ministers calling upon them, having old wounds healed, and rejoicing together as brothers, as they did before the dark days of bloodshed. "This mission," said a leading politician to me, "will do more to bring the Churches and races together than all the politicians have done for the last three years." I had the Rev. H. S. Bosman, of Pretoria—and those who know this name know it means much—and some of the leading Dutch ministers of the town on my platform, opening the meetings in prayer.

The first leader of the Dutch Reformed Church who called on me was Professor Hofmeyr, of the Theological Seminary, Stellenbosch. He is a typical Dutch scholar, grey-headed and venerable, but full of sunshine.



DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH, STELLENBOSCH,
FIRST DUTCH CHURCH IN WHICH I PREACHED.



PROFESSOR HOFMEYR.

THE FIRST MISSION—CAPE TOWN 25

One of his last words on leaving was, "Now, my brother, I want you to live always in the sunshine of God's love." He told me that eighteen months ago he read my autobiography, and had been impressed by it. He invited me to come and address the students at Stellenbosch. My committee said it was most important that I should go, as the college men had not been on speaking terms with the English since the war.

I went to Stellenbosch on April 29, and after talking for twenty minutes to the students, I suggested a free conference. Seventy or eighty of them were gathered in one of the smaller halls, as the college is being rebuilt. In my address I had expressed the hope that the mission would help to reconcile two Christian peoples who had long been estranged. One of the students asked me in the conference, "What do you mean by the reconciliation of Christians?"

I replied that I thought the Christian part of the English and Dutch nations ought to be the first to show the spirit of Christ. In the words of Scripture, "If any man have a quarrel against any, even as Christ forgave ye, so also do ye."

You and I, I said, would not like to go to heaven in a hurry and leave behind a sore spot that we could have healed. We should not like to hear the Lord Jesus Christ say, "You were in that place and failed to heal that sore spot." The students much appreciated my words, and I have had correspondence with some since asking advice about their future work.

After the conference a public service was held, and, although a busy Friday, the church was crowded with 1400 people, and about 150 entered the inquiry-room. This was a day never to be forgotten, and did much to gain the ear of the Dutch people during my trip.

Some idea of the far-reaching effects of the mission in Cape Town may be gathered if I name a few facts. Special trains were run as far as fifty miles out to bring the folk and take them home late. A dinner was given in my honour to members of Parliament by the president of the council, Mr. Polhemus Lyon, when I met some twenty busy men, including the Whip of the Progressive party and members of both sides of the House. Many members of Parliament were in constant attendance at the mission.

THE FIRST MISSION—CAPE TOWN 27

Thirty-five youths at one school decided for Christ. Sixteen young men at a branch of the Y.M.C.A. in one of the suburbs found Jesus. I had a letter from Mrs. Stakesby-Lewis (sister to Olive Schreiner), saying there were fifteen or twenty in her household rejoicing in Christ as a result of the mission. Twenty young men living in one boarding-house were converted. We heard of whole families coming into the light. I had a talk with a young man who was beautifully saved, and whose parents turned him from home because he had given up their Church, viz. Roman Catholic ; he had also left his situation for conscience' sake. Backsliders by the score were restored—Cape Town and South Africa is a “dumping-ground” for backsliders.

Among the many striking incidents in the mission was that of a young mother who was working to support her three children, having been deserted by her husband some months before. She went to the inquiry-room, she was led to the Saviour, and on rising from her knees she discovered her lost husband also rising from his knees. He, too, had found

the Saviour. This also happened in two other cases at our meetings.

A minister sent the following letter :—

“MY DEAR MR. SMITH,

“A mother and daughter send me word this morning that they both decided for Christ last night, and would like you to know. I do not know yet whether they passed through the inquiry-room or not. The other member of the family, a son, came out brightly on Tuesday.

“Another of our households has been blessed by the conversion of son and daughter. A clean sweep seems to have been made in our Bible classes, and the joy has come into our own home in the decision of our maid. These are a few instances out of our comparatively small congregation, for which we give glory to God and rejoice exceedingly. We had large expectations, and are looking for further happy results.

“The Lord continue to bless His Word richly through you, and give you an increasing joy in the work !”

A clerk in a large wine business told one of the workers that if the mission continued some of their staff must be dismissed, for every day some of their customers were calling to say, in consequence of the blessing they had received, their names must be taken off the books.

THE FIRST MISSION—CAPE TOWN 29

Fifteen Army Ordnance Corps men were converted, and to see them all sitting together and hear their testimony was a means of grace.

Four hundred coloured people were brought into the light and fellowship of the saints.

Restitution was made in many cases. Sons and husbands wrote home to loved ones to tell of the new-found joy and of prayers answered. There was joy everywhere ; songs instead of sighs.

The midnight meeting brought a tremendous crowd, over one hundred quite drunk, and hundreds more who had come direct from the beershops. Two thousand five hundred were present ; it was a very sad and heart-breaking sight, but another proof that these very people of whom the Churches have nearly despaired will respond and come to hear the Gospel when they are sought in a loving, Christ-like way. What a meeting this was ! Hearts and wills were bowed before God ; Jesus proved Himself stronger than Satan and sin ; scores went into the inquiry-rooms and were dealt with by consecrated workers.

A writer in the *South African News*, a leading

Cape newspaper, wrote an "Impression" of this midnight meeting. It is well worth quoting in full—

"An evil thoroughfare in District Six—the glare of lights, dense crowds, and stirring band music in the distance. The sinister silence of the scene is broken. Heads are thrust out of top windows; women rush on to the balconies; men crowd out of public-houses, and little barefooted children come in from the side streets and the lanes. A weary-looking girl, painted and decorated, steals into a dark doorway to see the Enemy march past in triumph.

"The procession is at least a quarter mile long, measuring from the two mounted policemen and the group of small boys that skip about the horses' legs, who head it, to the tipsy man who brings up the rear, urging the demonstration along with huzzas and flourishes of his cap. It is interspersed with red-flamed torches, and near every row of torches is a group singing hymns. The Salvation Army band is the one dash of colour in the moving throng. The white light from powerful lamps fixed on tall poles falls on the crimson uniforms and the flashing instruments. The drummers are drumming heart and soul, and the trumpeters are blowing earnestly. Behind the band comes a group of clergymen and evangelists, many of whose faces are recognizable in the bright light. Men and boys, and often women, leave their

THE FIRST MISSION—CAPE TOWN 31

doors and follow the procession. It passes through the city, sweeping through the narrow, shady streets, and it is near 11 o'clock when the tour is over and it is returning to the Parade. The publicans are banging their doors indignantly as it passes.

“The doors of the circus are choked with people, and hundreds are rushing across the Parade from all sides. It is no easy matter to gain admittance. The police are obliged to take the crowd in hand and regulate its entry. Inside men and women are climbing up the gallery stairs, or rushing to seats in the centre of the ring. In ten minutes the building is packed from floor to ceiling. There is a low hum of voices, above which are heard appeals for hymn-books, and requests from the stewards to make room for late arrivals. An individual, who has obviously gathered his enthusiasm from the bottle, offers to oblige the audience with a song. He insists to the stewards on his ability to entertain the people with a stirring ballad, but his offer is declined, and he subsides. Then Gipsy Smith appears in the pulpit, and there is an attempt at applause. The missionary holds up his hand. He looks round at the two thousand faces that are fixed on his, and says, ‘No. 136.’ The orchestra strikes up the tune, and in a minute, without asking any encouragement, the whole of that mighty congregation is singing heartily—

“‘Throw out the Life line,
Throw out the Life line,
Some one is drifting away.’

"Gipsy Smith looks round at his audience. It is a heterogeneous one. Men and women of all classes, nationalities, and colours are there. Here and there is seen the red coat of a soldier or the blue one of a sailor. The Salvation Army bandsmen make a fine blaze of colour. There are well-known evangelists and clergymen of all denominations, husbands and wives, respectable young girls, fashionable young men—drunken men and fallen women, too, brought in by the rescuers. The light from two great arc lamps shines on this huge and varied multitude.

"THE SERVICE.

"After the hymn, Major Jordon offers up a touching prayer: 'Let Thy power fall, O Lord, on this great assembly, and reveal to every man his need of God. Take into the shelter of Thy heart every one present. We ask these things for Christ's sake. Amen.'

"Then Gipsy Smith stood up, and waited till every eye was fixed on him. 'I want you now,' he said, 'to sing "I do believe."' It is a fine song; you all know it, I dare say. Perhaps some of you heard your mothers sing it long ago.' He spoke the last sentence in a low tone, full of tenderness. This is one of the secrets of Gipsy Smith's power as a missionary. He touches chords that awaken old memories. It was as if he said in this case to himself: 'There may be some poor rake in this crowd who heard his mother

THE FIRST MISSION—CAPE TOWN 33

sing this song years ago. If so, he can hardly sing it now without emotion. Once his heart is softened, it will not be hard to save him.' After the hymn, the missionary spoke a few homely words, recalling old times, bringing the memory of their mothers before the young men. Gipsy Smith believes that the memory of a good mother lives always, in spite of the most deadening influences. He can tell a hundred stories in which a mother's memory saved a young man from ruin. He appealed specially to those who lived evil and degraded lives, emphasizing the theory that no human creature is quite destitute of manhood, and that a chance word or incident or chord may cause the faint spark to glow and eventually burst into flame. When he had finished his three minutes' address, he exhorted his hearers to prayer. 'Pray now,' said he, 'pray as you have never prayed before.'

"Where there were at the least one hundred intoxicated men, interruptions were only to be expected, and those of the congregation who had just come from the beershops frequently interposed with such remarks as 'Good old Gipsy !' and 'Right you are, old man !' One man interrupted so frequently that the missionary had to appeal to him, and another, equally tipsy, requested to be permitted to sling the offender out. When a quarrel between these two seemed imminent, Gipsy Smith, with splendid tact, started a hymn, and in a moment two thousand voices were singing 'Rock of Ages.'

“The service lasted a little over half an hour, and before its conclusion over one hundred men—and even some young women!—stood up in the assembly and proclaimed themselves sinners, seeking salvation. A large number of men took the pledge to abstain from liquor. A concluding hymn was sung heartily, and just as the clocks were chiming midnight the vast crowd was dismissed.

“It was a great night for Gipsy Smith. It has placed him in communication with one hundred more men and women in sore need of help and hope. It may be that the one hundred will not all keep to their resolution; but if only a single soul is saved, the victory is a thousand times worth that great procession and that thousands-thronged midnight service.”

A thanksgiving meeting was held on the last night of the mission, when ten ministers and two or three of the laymen who had worked constantly in the inquiry-rooms took part. No tongue can tell the blessed facts they had to relate: congregations revived, prayer-meetings crowded and all alive; whole families and classes brought to God, and scores whom they knew personally were rejoicing in Jesus as their Saviour and Lord who had not been tabulated. All told how their faith in prayer, in the old Gospel, and their own spiritual life had been

THE FIRST MISSION—CAPE TOWN 35

renewed. Two especially spoke of how they had been impressed with the fact that such numbers of men of backbone and intellect had been won for God in this mission, and they pledged themselves to preach the old truths as never before. One brother told of the fact that before the mission he had to dismiss his church choir because they were so worldly, but "Blessed be God!" he said, "in this mission they have all got new hearts, and have all come back to me." Another told of seven ministers who had told him that their children had all been saved since the meetings began.

Over 2000 adults came to a converts' meeting; 3050 names in all were taken in the inquiry-rooms. But this cannot tabulate the results; time cannot reveal all; we shall not know till eternity dawns the full blessing and victory of those days. The Churches are busy; the pastors are all at the work of shepherding. We have done our best to begin the work; we must leave it now for those on the spot to nurse, to feed, and to train for service.

CHAPTER IV

THE DIAMOND CITY

THE departure from Cape Town was one not easily forgotten. We left the city at 4.10 p.m. on Tuesday, May 10. A great crowd came to wish us good-bye and bid us God-speed ; many of the new converts were there, wearing a badge they have adopted of white and red ribbon, symbolical of the text, "Though your sins be red like crimson, they shall be as white as snow." It was a very touching sight to see so many who had just begun to walk the life of faith, having fellowship one with another, and telling each other of some new victory, or relating some fresh experience, and singing the favourite choruses of the mission. It seemed as though everybody had some little bit of fresh news to tell of blessing, coming to light, as the

result of the mission. One pastor told of many converts at his church at his ordinary Sunday night service. Another said, "Oh, that is what we must look for now, results every Sunday for long to come." These expectations were being realized, as will be seen from the following extract from the *Methodist Churchman*, the organ of the Methodist Church of South Africa :—

"Although the missionary has gone, the results of the work are by no means ended. The newspaper reports have given no idea of the tremendous enthusiasm that was aroused by the mission in Cape Town and neighbourhood. Such vast crowds have never been seen at any religious gatherings in the country. The hall held nearly three thousand, and yet it was packed nightly, and hundreds were turned away. Nor was the effect merely to produce excitement. As we begin to follow up the cases of decision, we come in contact with marvellous instances of the power of the Gospel. The drunkard and other known sinners have been saved body and soul; and more wonderful still, the careless, selfish, disinterested ones have at last been touched, and it is most inspiring to see the new hope and love that has been kindled in the heart of young and old. The members and professors have found new meaning in the Christian life, and many who knew only the form have at length realized the

experience of religion. Even the ministers seem to have found new methods, and rediscovered lost gifts of evangelism. On the Sunday evening following the mission there were as many conversions in the various meetings as if the special services were still going on. There were not a few decisions in our own Methodist services, while reports are to hand of scores of open decisions in Baptist, Church of England, and other communities. In most cases, special meetings have been arranged to deal with the new element which has come into the various Churches. A very thorough system of names and addresses has been arranged, and in every case the new converts are being taken in hand by the Church for which they express preference on the inquiry-room card. This sensible organization has done much to ensure the permanence of the good done."

The mission had brought ministers, Churches, people, and missioner into a bond that can never be broken. Under these circumstances it was not easy to say good-bye; but it was no use, the time had gone, the guard waved his flag, and off we steamed, amidst the shouts of those we had learned to love, praying that we might meet them all again where farewells are unknown.

By 6.50 the same night we had reached Wellington, the home of the beloved and

honoured Dr. Andrew Murray. Here we stayed for the night, for the doctor had invited me to preach in his church. When the time of service drew near, the church—which seats 1500 persons—was crowded with a congregation which consisted mainly of young men and women, Wellington being a great educational centre which has grown up around Andrew Murray. The service was a very powerful one, and will not soon be forgotten; about 150 rose to commit themselves to definitely follow Jesus. It seemed as though heaven were very near; old and young realized a joy on earth that no words can describe. One of the workers in this centre told me some months after that for ten nights in succession meetings were held in which inquirers were dealt with as a result of this one night, showing how ready and ripe the harvest is in South Africa, only waiting to be gathered.

After a good night and an early breakfast we resumed our journey—one we shall ever remember, but one not easy to describe. Mountain and valley, light and shade, sunshine and shadow, through vineyards and fruit gardens; the scenery through these Hexriver Mountains is truly

grand. We needed two engines to haul us to the top of the mountains. What a mighty climb it was! Round and round, back, then on again, till at last we reached the top, slowly but surely. At Tovws River Station, 160 miles from Cape Town, I stepped out on to the platform, to be greeted by a gentleman, who told me that he had heard me preach and received blessing eighteen years ago, in a mission I had held in Penzance, and that four of his companions of those days, who also were converted, had become ministers. We learned from this good brother that a party of friends had been down from Tovws River to attend the mission at Cape Town, and that they did not regret their trip.

After a long night in the train we reached Kimberley, the diamond city, at 3.45 p.m., after a journey of thirty hours. Here we found the ministers and a host of friends waiting to meet us and give us a royal welcome. We felt at home at once; many were the "God bless you's" and welcomes we received. We were soon conducted to a carriage and a pair of greys, and were driven to our host's, where everything



IN THE DE BEERS COMPOUND, KIMBERLEY.



KAFFIR KRAAL.

had been done to make us feel, though from home, we were amongst those who were our friends. We found that the carriage and pair was the same as Mr. Chamberlain and Lord Milner used on their visit to Kimberley. This carriage was put at our command during our stay, to be used just as we desired.

The public reception and welcome meeting took place on Saturday, May 14, when the Town Hall was crowded with a representative gathering. The first meeting made a deep impression. Sunday came, and with it great expectations, and we were not disappointed, for the Word was with power. The Lord gave me much assurance that He was with me, and the inquiry-rooms were soon filled with those who were ready and willing to make a full surrender to Jesus Christ. The mission gripped the city from the first meeting.

Monday we were taken by the brethren to see the first central compound, where from 1500 to 2000 Kaffirs are kept. We cannot forget our visit; this brought us into touch with a bit of real heathenism. I think it was one of the most wonderful sights I had ever witnessed. The

compound presented a scene of wild animation. The natives were engaged in multifarious occupations, cooking meal and meat in every conceivable manner ; playing ; sewing, with needle and sewing-machine ; cycling ; using their musical instruments, and, for them, with great skill ; eating and drinking, but nothing intoxicating ; hardly, if ever, at rest, constant excitement and change everywhere. The assistant-manager was kindness itself in showing us all there was to see—sleeping apartments, church (which the company provides), hospital, and stores. During the morning an impromptu service was arranged. A bell was rung in the centre of the compound ; mounting a stand with the ministers and my wife and daughter, we started with the well-known hymn, “How sweet the name of Jesus sounds,” to a good old tune, the natives singing in their own language. This soon brought a crowd ; the boys began running from all quarters of the compound, till there must have been five or six hundred around. Prayer was offered by the Rev. C. E. Dent, who works among the natives, in their own tongue, after which my daughter and I

sang "Count your blessings." Although many of them could not take in all the words, their big eyes opened, and it seemed as if an invisible spirit touched those dusky men, and when I spoke to them through one of their number, who volunteered to interpret, eyes, mouths, ears, and hearts were all open to receive the Word. What a deep hush fell upon us all ! It was a very striking scene, and as we shook hands with many, we saw the tear standing in the eye and felt the grip which means so much more than words. Many followed us to the gates to have a last look and to wave us good-bye. We hope to meet these, our brothers in black, up yonder, where there will be no difference in colour at His dear feet, who has made of one blood all nations of men.

The work of finding the diamonds is, of course, the great thing for Kimberley, and, to a stranger, has a fascination all its own. There is still some open mining going on, but most of it is done underground, with huge shafts needing hundreds of thousands of pounds' worth of machinery to work them. The bringing of the diamond-carrying ground to the surface, the

spreading of it over many scores of acres of ground for the sun, rain, and air to pulverize, which takes many months to do, the washing and milling—all these are full of interest ; but the exciting moment comes when you see the diamond-bearing settlement of the washing being filtered through a machine, rolling down an inclined table which is in constant motion, covered over with a very thick coating of grease. These are called the pulsating plates, and the grease has an affinity for the diamond, or the diamond for the grease, which cannot be explained, but there it is. The small stones, gravel, and refuse—whatever comes over these tables—is washed away by the flowing water, leaving the diamonds embedded in the grease. The next process is the boiling of the grease and diamonds, which are scraped off the tables together, so as to separate the jewels from the grease. The workman who discovered this way of separating the diamonds from the stones and refuse showed us round, and explained how he was led to discover this process. While standing and watching, as if for our special benefit out came a big diamond, larger than a good-sized

marble, which we handled at once. We were then shown the washings of the day before for the whole of the Kimberley mines, which amounted in value to considerably over £16,000. Afterwards we were driven to the head office, and were shown one of the sights of a lifetime—diamonds laid out, already sorted, on one table, valued at £60,000. To complete the sight-seeing, the following day a number of the ministers and myself were early at the mines, dressed in borrowed clothes, jackets, and hats, provided for the purpose. We looked like a gang of miners; I do not think the various congregations would have recognized their pastors or their missionary just at that moment. Under the guidance of one of the company's officials we were taken down, down, down, into the bowels of the earth, 2520 feet below, into the various tunnels, levels, and workings. We saw the boys at work, handled a pick, brought down some blue ground, but I cannot tell whether I brought down a diamond. All this was enthralling to me. We stayed as long as we could bear the heat, for this was intense, then the cage was crowded with ten or twelve

of us once more ; and as we rose from the depths of darkness into the pure, clear light and sweet, fresh air, we all joined in singing "Count your blessings." De Beers Company needs a chapter, but here are some few facts—

These are the largest diamond mines in the world. They were discovered in 1870, when the colony was suffering from its deepest financial depression, and was on the verge of bankruptcy. The find of the diamond fields saved the colony. The sum of four millions is invested in these mines ; one million is paid out every year in wages ; an average of ten thousand pounds' worth is found every day. We were told that last year over five million pounds' worth of diamonds were discovered in the Kimberley mines.

The stamp of Cecil Rhodes can be seen all over Kimberley. He was a great man ; whether you take the great De Beers Company, which is largely, I understand, the result of his administrative genius, or the devotion with which he attached men to his person and policy, it is all the same : it is the mark of a great man.

The results of my work in Kimberley cannot

be told. Here is an extract from the Kimberley paper—

“During the late political campaign, when excitement was popularly supposed to be at its highest pitch, it was not always possible to find the public halls of this town packed with eager listeners. For eleven days this month, however, the largest buildings—the Town Hall and Drill Hall—have been filled with people to their utmost capacity, there being a wild rush to gain admission soon as the doors were opened. It reminded one of the crowds waiting to gain admittance into a popular London theatre. But the people of Kimberley were not rolling up in crowds to see a play; they were wanting to hear a man who vehemently condemned the theatre, the cardroom, the ballroom; they wished to hear the simple Gospel story from the lips of Gipsy Smith, the noted evangelist, and to hear him and his daughter sing Gospel melodies. Such scenes had never been witnessed in Kimberley before; evangelists had previously been here, but they did not ‘draw’ the people like Gipsy Smith. He seemed to magnetize the community. For ten days the Town Hall was crowded to excess, and five minutes after the doors were opened at the Drill Hall on Tuesday evening the vast building was packed, numbers of people failing to gain admission.”

It is true the crowds were great, the attention

and interest unequalled for Kimberley, as the papers said. It was no small thing to see hundreds of men turning away from the search after fortunes, mixing up all together, singing the songs their mothers taught them, coming back to their cradle faith, listening to the old story, weeping beneath its power and surrendering to its command. And they did this in their hundreds, blessed be God. We had not drops but showers of blessings. There are great possibilities for the Churches out here; the men are here in their thousands, and young men who, remember, have no home-life and no attractions there to keep them occupied, for the boarding-house system is meal and bedroom, which is most often shared with others, and the street. This means the saloon, the low club, and the theatre, and sometimes worse; and yet these men have a knowledge of better things, for many have been brought up in good homes in England, and will and do respond to the living, real Gospel of Jesus Christ. It does not matter how far a man has gone into sin, he knows the real thing when he sees and hears it. Even the devil knew



THE CAKE AWARDED ME AT CAPE TOWN.
(By the South African *Owl*.)



IN THE DE BEERS COMPOUND, KIMBERLEY.

Jesus, and said so : "I know Thee who Thou art, the Holy One of God."

The number of those who passed through the inquiry-rooms, and were personally spoken and prayed with, was 1360 ; and on the Saturday night, at the gospel temperance meeting, over 120 signed the pledge. But this is not all. The best, and I believe sometimes the biggest blessing and results come outside the inquiry-rooms. There are multitudes to whom the inquiry-room does not appeal. It does help thousands, I know, for I have proved it ; but there are thousands who get good who never come there. For instance, the last service at Kimberley, just before closing with the Benediction, I said I felt sure there were many there who had found Christ as the result of the mission, but had not publicly declared their decision ; sometime while the preaching was going on, or in the silent prayer that followed, or when they reached their own room, they had made the great surrender to God of heart and life. I was persuaded this was so, and they ought not to let me go away without my knowing. If I were right, and any had done this,

intelligently and honestly, would they stand up and let me see them? They got up in all directions until 150 were on their feet, and if there were 150 in this one meeting, there must have been many others in the other days of the mission; and this is always so.

One man told us in the thanksgiving meeting of his praying for his old father-in-law, and he was converted in this mission two days before his eightieth birthday. Then the old man rose and told how Jesus had saved him, and everybody was melted. Another told how he had to stop business and turn his office into a prayer-meeting, and some were saved; and another had a similar story to tell. A minister told of two sights in the inquiry-room: a Dutch Christian working there with all his heart got hold of a Britisher, and pointed him to Jesus; a little way off was a British worker helping a Dutchman to his Lord. These men were fighting each other in the war. The Gospel is the great healer; British and Boer will feel towards each other as they should when Christ has His right place in their hearts.

Walking down the street on the Saturday

afternoon, a working man rushed up to me with his face black, just as he had left work, with a big leg of mutton under his arm. Gripping my hand as though he would pull it off, he said, "God bless you, sir! I have wanted to get at you to thank you, for my blessing is great, but this is my first chance. I, my wife, and six children have all been converted in this mission; we cannot forget you and the blessing you have brought to us," and away he went with joy showing in every line of his face. Another came to me and said, "I have spent two or three pounds a week in drink, but this week not a drop has passed my lips, and all my money went home. I have lost the desire for it, sir, thank God." A minister spoke of his two sons who had been saved and his whole Church revived, and large numbers coming forward to join his Church who had been converted. Quarrels have been made up, wrongs confessed, stolen goods restored, husbands and wives reunited.

Here is an extract from the Kimberley paper, giving some idea of the thanksgiving meeting which closed the mission—

"THANKSGIVING MEETING.

"The thanksgiving meeting was held in the Drill Hall. Here again a great crowd assembled. Some of the side rooms were full, and crowds stood around the entrances. After a few short prayers, the chairman, the Rev. W. H. Richards (President of the D.R. Ministers' Association), said he desired, on behalf of his brother ministers and himself, to express their appreciation of the great and glorious work that Gipsy Smith had, under the Divine blessing, been permitted to accomplish. The results could not all be tabulated, though the numerical returns of the mission had exceeded all their highest expectations. The results could not fail to be of lasting and great good to their Churches and the community. The deepening of the spiritual life, the greater unity among the Churches, the drawing together of the two races, British and Dutch, in this intensely spiritual work, and the impetus given to the temperance work, were great results, for which they thanked God. He wished also to mention the singing of Gipsy and Miss Smith, and the addresses of Miss Smith to the young people, which had been such a help to the mission.

"The Rev. P. J. de Vaal wished to endorse what had been said of the value of the mission. It had removed racial prejudices and feeling, and brought the two races together. Their own Dutch people had joined heartily in the mission. Scores and hundreds

had received blessings. Turning to Gipsy Smith, under deep emotion, Mr. de Vaal said, 'I thank you, Gipsy Smith, as the instrument of God, for the great blessings that have come to my own congregation.'

"Most of the ministers, and many from the body of the hall, added their short testimonies, some of which were very touching, to the value of the mission.

"When Gipsy Smith rose it was a signal for great applause. His heart was too full to say much. He was deeply moved by what had been said. He urged on the Church members to do all they could for the new converts, and for all he advised prayer, Bible-reading, attendance on the means of grace, and trying to do something for God every day."

Those who have known Kimberley longest say it has never been so mightily moved by the power of the Gospel. May the blessing abide in every heart! The ministers and Churches have their hands full in nursing the new converts. May all love, wisdom, patience, and strength be given, so that all may be done to conserve every soul! My work ceased with the last meeting; the work of the Churches lies before them. May they rise to the opportunity! If this should be, as it ought, then the converts

of to-day will be the strong men of the Church to-morrow.

When we left Kimberley on May 25, the station was a sight to behold—crowds everywhere singing “Count your blessings” and “God be with you till we meet again.” The scene cannot be described—hats, handkerchiefs waving all along the line for a quarter of a mile, and reaching as far as a little suburban station, where we found another large contingent waiting. The paper said afterwards that it was equal to the days when Mr. Chamberlain, General French, and General Kekewich left the town.

So ended a wonderful mission in the Diamond City. May as much trouble be taken to protect and keep every soul saved as care is taken to watch and protect the smallest jewels which are found in its mines; then some day these jewels—the souls of men, which will outlive the stars—will flash in the diadem of the King Eternal, when diamonds, sapphires, and opals are burned away.

CHAPTER V

THE WORK AT BLOEMFONTEIN

BLOEMFONTEIN is the capital of the Orange River Colony, a city of twelve or fifteen thousand white people, besides natives, a few Jews, Greeks, and Malays.

The church buildings are small, except for the Dutch church, which seats about eight hundred. The public hall is about the same size, so this was chosen for the mission, the rooms being a little better for our purposes. At the utmost we may have had nine hundred people inside the building.

The local committee had done all in their power to make ready for our coming. The meeting for workers held on Saturday, May 28, was a little disappointing in attendance. The impression had gone forth that this meeting

was for workers only, and this no doubt kept the crowd away. However, we had a good beginning; the spirit of the meeting was delightful. After prayer and conference we all felt we understood each other, and were ready for the work.

Sunday came with its blue sky and sunshine, and with the hour of meeting the hall was quite full, and at night hundreds were turned away. We were cramped for room; still about one hundred were dealt with personally in the inquiry-rooms. So began our work in this city. Night by night the scene was repeated, the congregations made up mostly of men. This mission, more than the other two, might be called the "men's mission," for sometimes I do not think we had a hundred women in the building. Men everywhere—rich and poor, British and Dutch, sitting together at the foot of the Cross, feeling its welding and wielding power. It is no small victory to bring these two races together, yet this was our joy in every city.

Since the ice was broken by Professor Hofmeyr, of Stellenbosch, on that memorable day



Photo by

BLOEMFONTEIN.

J. N. P. Edwards.

in April, when he invited me to address the theological students and then to preach in the Dutch Reformed Church, men have been again in fellowship who had not gathered together for prayer since the outbreak of the war. Nowhere was this more seen than in Bloemfontein, for here we were honoured guests in the Dutch parsonage, and the Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Kriel did all in their power to make us feel we were beloved in the Lord, thus bringing their church into line with the mission. Some who fought against each other to the bitter end in the war are now doing their best to bring each other to Jesus Christ. The sight was truly wonderful! Nothing heals like the balm of the Gospel; no bitterness can live when we look long into the face of the Son of God. When we fall in love with Him we must love our brother; all malice melts away before the fires of Pentecost.

There were many things to cheer us in this mission; the greatest good came to ministers and Churches. A Dutch lady, on the closing day, came forward with tears streaming down her face. She said, in her broken English,

"God bless you ; you have brought us peace." She passed on, and a gentleman, a big Scotsman, who was all through the war, came next, and he said, "Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." A Dutch father stayed at home one night to take care of the little ones while his wife and daughters came to the mission. On their return they went to him with outstretched arms, saying, "Father, congratulate us ; we come back to you new creatures in Christ Jesus—we are all saved." He rushed to the parsonage the next morning very early to tell us all about it, and though he could not speak to us in English, he told us in Dutch, through the minister, the glad news, and with tears we rejoiced together. This was one of the wonderful features, that so many Dutch, who did not speak English, came to the meetings, and though English was spoken, the Spirit convicted of sin and led them to Jesus. Somehow the Spirit made them understand, and the work for eternity was done.

The work penetrated into the heart of the city. One day we had tea with the bishop, dean, clergy, and the Roman priest. Quite a

little correspondence took place in the papers *re* sudden conversion, and, as is usual in such cases, most was said by those who know least about it. I add a few extracts from a letter, written by the Roman Catholic priest, for this will show how deeply the mission stirred the people—

“GIPSY SMITH’S MISSION.

“SIR,

“In your weekly issue of June 11 I see a very bitter and contemptuous attack by ‘Free Lance’ upon Gipsy Smith and his converts, and upon the doctrine of ‘instantaneous conversion,’ which must have pained many of your readers who are neither Protestants nor know anything of Gipsy Smith beyond what they read in the papers. Since it cannot be your desire to outrage the feelings of large numbers of your readers, I hope you will insert a protest against it. ‘Free Lance’ does not believe in ‘instantaneous conversion,’ and so, forsooth, Gipsy Smith’s influence is ‘pure mesmerism,’ and his converts are all either ‘effeminate men or hysterically disposed women.’

Has ‘Free Lance’ never heard of the Day of Pentecost, when ‘about three thousand souls’ from a very mixed congregation, ‘pricked to the heart’ by one sermon of St. Peter, repentance and faith in Jesus Christ, ‘gladly received the word and were baptized,

and continued steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers' ? Many of these, no doubt, were devout men ; but that need mean no more than Jews by religion. St. Peter preached repentance to them as well as faith in Jesus Christ. And why should any man be concerned to deny that people, who, though regenerate in holy baptism, are yet dead in sins and trespasses, may be brought by specially gifted preaching suddenly to realize their condition and the fact that for Christ's sake God freely forgives and justifies those who truly repent and unfeignedly believe His holy Gospel ? . . . The writer confidently appeals to the three hundred hearers of Gipsy Smith who took pledges, and whom 'Free Lance' calls either hysterical women or effeminate men, to show themselves worthy followers of Him whose relations once said He was beside Himself, and to pray that the English Church Mission of Help, when it comes to Bloemfontein next month, may be fruitful in conversions, whether instantaneous or otherwise.

"I have the honour to be, sir, yours respectfully,

"CATHOLIC PRIEST.

"Springfontein, *June 14.*"

The editor of *The Friend* at Bloemfontein was most sympathetic in his references, and gave us a column and a half written by himself every day. He tried to report the addresses at

the mission in the spirit in which they were said, thus enabling me to reach a far larger congregation than I could have otherwise done, and there were people converted through the reading of the reports.

About six hundred passed through the inquiry-rooms, and nearly three hundred pledges were taken on the Saturday night; and this is not all. The blessing realized by those who have been separated by the war, who are together again in fellowship, is to know that God is indeed amongst the children of men. Remember this: all took place close to the new-made graves of about three thousand men who died by wounds or fever, or were killed in those terrible days of bloodshed which have so recently passed over this sad and devastated country.

And the work did not stop with the mission. Some weeks after the secretary wrote to say that, as a direct result of the mission, they are having many united Free Church efforts—one is the United Evangelistic Service once a month in the Town Hall at the close of the other Sunday night's service, and another is a United Open-air Service.

CHAPTER VI

THE GOLDEN CITY

JOHANNESBURG is one of the wonders of the world for its years. Gold was known to exist in the very early days, but the Boers who knew kept their knowledge to themselves, lest the foreigners should come in and swamp them. The famous main reef which has made these goldfields and this city the premier goldfields of the world, was discovered about June, 1886. There is a story of a Dutch farmer who owned the land, that a rock, which proved to be an outcrop of the main reef, was his favourite seat in an afternoon, while smoking his pipe. He was very poor, lived on mealies and bacon, yet he sat on gold worth millions, and did not know it. As soon as gold was found, a rush was made from all quarters, with carts, waggons, and horses ; the men lived in tents. A farm



Photo by]

MARKET PLACE, JOHANNESBURG.

[N. P. Edwards.

was sold for £70,000, after gold was found, which cost the owner a bottle of brandy and an old mare. These fields were proclaimed open to the public in September, 1886. The Commissioner's tent was pitched about where the market-house stands to-day, and was 10 feet by 10. This tent, with all its papers, was blown away in a wind storm. Shortly afterwards a court-house was erected. The first newspaper, *The Diggers' News*, was published February, 1887. The town of Johannesburg was surveyed in October, 1886, the first sale taking place in December; lots which were sold for 2s. 6d. to 20s. cannot be bought for £3000 to-day. The city went up in leaps and bounds; men were working day and night. I am told if you were out of a neighbourhood for a month, when you returned you nearly lost yourself. Now you have a modern city of 84,000 white people and 74,000 black—this is the last census return, April, 1904—a grand population of 158,000. Think of that in eighteen years; and all here say you ought to deduct three years for the war, for during that time nothing was done. Really magnificent buildings, eight or nine

stories high, shops, hotels, offices, warehouses, flats, handsome blocks, palatial residences, boarding-houses, wide streets, open squares, a park, and with three newspapers daily. I suppose Johannesburg is one of the richest centres in the world.

One of the things which I wonder at is, that the Churches have not bigger church buildings; they are, for the most part, comparatively small. Of course it should be remembered that they were erected when the population was small. They have good sites and good congregations. The present buildings are well attended by young men. There is a splendid opening here for a central mission. Oh, the thousands of young men who have no home-life! Here they are away from home, mother, sister, and, in many cases, from wife and children, living in boarding-houses, where they room, in scores of cases, with three, if not four, others; no time to be alone, to think, or read, or pray. When out of their bedrooms and from the dining-table, they are in the street; no home life at all. This is one of the curses of South African city life.

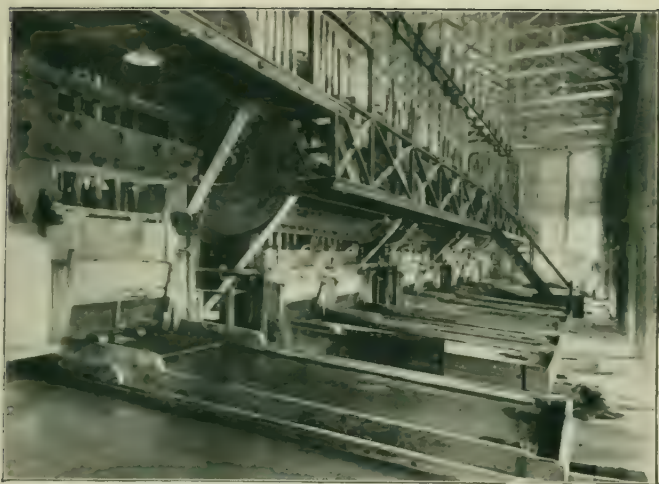


Photo by]

[N. P. Edwards,

INTERIOR OF GOLD BATTERY, JOHANNESBURG.



Photo by]

[N. P. Edwards,

INTERIOR OF A GOLD MINE.

If the church buildings were all filled there would still be thousands who could not get in anywhere. The mission proved that the people of this land would listen to the Gospel—and did, and loved it. I believe that there is a bigger ear for the Gospel message than the majority of Christian workers have been willing to believe or admit.

Into this city we landed on June 9. The next night a reception was given to us by the Executive of the Church Council. About 250 were present, and to our joy and the joy of the English brethren, the Dutch Reformed ministers, with many of their leaders, came. A very refreshing hour and a half were spent in free expression of thought, prayer, and song. The friends were very hopeful, for if ever men had worked and prepared, as if they expected victory, these men had. They had bought and brought out from England a big tent, capable of seating 3000 people, and chairs, from America, to the number of 2000; the rest of the seats—forms—were made on the spot. The whole of the interior was boarded and made quite comfortable, with two smaller tents for inquiry-

rooms. This, together with printing and lighting and other sundries, brought up the total expenses to the large sum of £2000. This speaks of faith in God and in men, and as I heard my dear friend Thomas Champness say once, "When God has a big job on hand, faith always gets the contract."

The mission started on Saturday night, June 11, and at the first meeting the tent was taxed to its utmost capacity, with a congregation from every part of the world. I spoke to some I had met in New York, Sydney, Ballarat, Melbourne, London, Chatham, Carlisle, and dear old Hanley, where so much of my life's work was done. The first Sunday the stewards had all they could do to manage the crowds; but with smiles, which came from the grace within, and patience, all passed off well, and at the close of the first sermon, when the appeal was made, the rooms were at once filled with those who were seeking Christ. The mission had won its first victory. The next day, while in the city, a business man stopped me, and said, "Sir, your work in this city will help to mould a continent." The crowds grew as the days passed; the conviction

and interest deepened with every service ; a power from the unseen world was upon us all, and strong men wept like children. The Lord was with my word, and unconverted and backsliders knew it ; no compromise for sin or wrong in any shape or form ; I tried to hit out everywhere. The inconsistencies of the Church were laid bare, while the Holy Spirit searched the heart and awakened the conscience and illuminated the judgment. I never felt greater liberty in preaching, and never felt more sure that the Word was in the demonstration of the Spirit and with power. The mission was the talk of the city : the papers spoke of it fairly well, until I said some plain things about the card-playing, dancing, and the theatre, quoting the late Clement Scott. Then they howled with rage, and said my statements were scandalous. It was the old story of "These men do exceedingly trouble our city, and teach customs which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe." They were actuated by one motive, and claimed credit for another. "The hope of their gains was gone ;" and so in Johannesburg we were told the theatres were practically empty, and so were

the bars. One hotel manager told me we cleared his bar every night when meeting-time came, and some of his best customers passed on the other side of the street. The tide rolled on and on, higher and higher, until the leading people of the city came, and they heard the Gospel in all its fulness, as straight as I could preach it. The number of the inquirers grew as the interest deepened.

The two Friday nights were given up to gospel temperance meetings, and in these two 1100 signed the pledge. Each Saturday afternoon, at 3 p.m., a meeting was held for young people, the age limit being over nine and under twenty. We had at each of these meetings 2500 young folk. My daughter gave the first address in each case, and her words went home ; then I used the closing moments to lead them to a full surrender of themselves to Jesus Christ, and each day hundreds of young lives were consecrated to the service of their Lord. These young folk went back to their homes, where I trust for all time the effects of the mission will be felt, and also through eternity. Many of the older people were won in this

way ; fathers and mothers, sisters and brothers came because some young person had gone home and spoken of a joy in Jesus the home had not known.

The days of the mission passed all too soon for the people and for me, for I never had such continued crowds of men, and never had a more loving response to my appeals anywhere in the world than in this city, where men have been living for money and the making of it, and where they have given themselves up to its power and have been held in its awful grip. Again we proved that Jesus is stronger than Satan and sin, and the victories can never be told on earth. Some of the stories I heard I could not tell if I would—stories of the deepest shame. Thank God, the old life is abandoned, and the struggle is being made to live the new life, and, as far as possible, to undo the past. There are some cases of such definite answers to prayer that we may speak of them to the praise of our Almighty Saviour. A letter is before me from a gentleman who came, with the whole of his family, from a city a hundred miles away to attend the mission ; before they

went home, all were rejoicing in the light and liberty of the children of God. Three sisters and two brothers wrote to say the mission was the turning-point in their lives, for they all five were saved. A friend wrote to say he was sent for by a gentleman whom he knew. When he got to his house, he said, "I have been to hear Gipsy Smith. He made me feel so bad, I would not go again; but I wanted to know more about him, so I bought his 'Life,' and the reading of it has made me so miserable I can neither eat nor sleep. I want you to pray for me." This he did, and soon the man was rejoicing in Christ. "Now," said he, "help me to destroy the drink in my house;" so out came the port and the whisky, two dozen bottles of the one and half a dozen bottles of the other. All went down the sink. "Now," said he, "I am happy." Thank God! Four members of one family wrote to say they were led to Jesus in the mission. A minister wrote, "Praise the Lord with me; large numbers of my congregation have been converted, and many more have been brought into closer union with their Lord." Then he adds, "Pray for me—

“ 1. That by the Spirit’s power I may forget all things that are behind me, which are blotted out by His blood.

“ 2. To walk as a true follower of Christ without reproach.

“ 3. To become more faithful in my work as a minister ; to preach with a passion for souls.

“ 4. To be a New Testament minister in the spirit. These things I ask for myself.”

Three coloured men, Kaffirs, were saved so sweetly, and wrote me to say how surprised they were with the new life, and asking me to pray that they might be kept. A brother wrote to say five brothers came to the meeting, sat together, went into the inquiry-room together, and were all converted ; when they rose from their knees, they fell on each other’s necks and wept for joy, saying, “The prayers of our dear mother, who is in heaven, are answered at last.”

Eight years ago a man stole a gold watch, but had not been found out. The morning after he gave himself to God, he went off to the man from whom he had stolen the watch,

and returned it. This story was told me in the home from which the watch was taken.

A deserter from the army is now in prison ; he gave himself up the morning after he had been in my service. To be a Christian for him meant that, and he is bravely suffering.

Another wrote, "Praise the Lord, I got gloriously saved in the mission. I have been a backslider for nearly six years. My mother, writing from Bath, England, by the last mail, said, 'I wonder if you know that your dear old mother is still praying for you, and looking out for that letter, which she knows will come some day, to tell her you are saved ?' That letter is on its way home, and when it reaches mother there will be joy in Bath, as well as in heaven."

A gentleman wrote to say, "I was passing the tent on Wednesday last, June 14, at a quarter to nine, and I came up to the side of the tent to listen. I heard you call out, 'If I came to your home, and I asked you to show me the place where you kneel to pray, could you do it ?' These words pierced my guilty conscience ; they took me back to my mother's knee, and I thought how she taught me to



MISSION COMMITTEE, JOHANNESBURG.

pray, and how far I had wandered, and I felt my sin and its burden. That night I got down in my room and prayed earnestly to my mother's God. The next night I came to the meeting, and at the close of the meeting, when you sang 'When I survey the wondrous Cross,' I came out and gave myself to God, to be His for ever, and oh ! sir, the joy I have I cannot describe." Another letter is before me which says, "Sir, can you imagine the joy on my dear mother's face when last night she fell on my neck and on my wife's neck, and said, with tears, 'God has answered my prayers for you both' ? Now we are both saved, we cannot forgive ourselves for keeping this joy from her, and the glory from Jesus, so long ; but, thank God ! the prayers *are* answered."

A drunkard wrote, "As soon as I saw the announcement of the mission, it made me think of the years I had spent in sin, drinking, gambling, and uncleanness, and I resolved, before the mission began, I would be saved ; and I am, thank God ! and all the old desire has gone, a new power possesses me, and I am determined to live for God."

Fourteen young men and women had arranged a dance ; in the mean time they came to the mission, and were all converted. The dance fell through, for none of them would go. They did not want it, for they had found Jesus, and He satisfied them with a joy the world and its pleasure can never give.

These facts are taken from personal letters to me, and therefore I give them with confidence.

A very touching thing must be mentioned. At the first young people's meeting I noticed a body of young folks who were not joining in when we sang "Count your blessings." So I stopped the hymn, and asked why this was so. I was told they were Dutch children from an orphan home. The following week we visited this home, and found 250 young people who had all surrendered to Christ. The minister in charge, Mr. Kriel, had taught them, since the last meeting, "Count your blessings" in Dutch—and they did sing it. When they came to the second young people's meeting I asked them to stand and sing this Dutch version of our collection hymn, and in a moment 250 orphans were singing while we listened,

with moist eyes—for were not their fathers sleeping beneath the veldt, victims of the war, and yet their children were joining with us that day in the praises of God !

At the close of the mission husbands were rejoicing that their wives and children were converted ; wives were praising the Lord that drunken and gambling husbands were sober and praying. Parents had their hearts made very tender because children, long prayed for, were going home with happy faces, telling how great things the Lord had done for them. Letters crossed the water to loved ones far away—mothers, fathers, and wives telling of the new life, and the resolve to live in the future for Jesus Christ. Surely there is joy in heaven, as well as on earth.

The midnight meeting was even greater than at Cape Town. The organization was so complete that every canteen, and every likely place where men and women would be, was visited by an advance guard of 150 men, who gave reserve tickets to all those that needed them. The tent was filled with the people they had found in the beershops, etc., and we were sure

we had the right class, for admission was only by ticket. We had from 1200 to 1500 people, more or less drunk, some of them having to be propped up; but the old story and the old songs captured their hearts.

One of the workers found a man in the streets with his face cut and bleeding. He took him to the service and prayed for him, and when the invitation was given, struggled to get him to decide for Christ. When he had accepted the Saviour, and signed the pledge, he found that the man had no home and no money, so he immediately took him to his own home. He argued that if this man had had his heart broken at the Cross, he would have to be kept at the Cross. To his home he went, and there not being sufficient bedroom accommodation, he slept in the parlour. He got him washed, and in the morning he looked like a new creature. Then came the problem of what to do with him for the day. "At last," says this gentleman, "I said to him, 'Just mind my little boy, and do a little in the garden.' So I left him with my little child playing in the garden. From that moment I could see the

change in him ; his face wore quite a different expression. That night I found I could not go to the meeting, so I asked him to take my wife and bring her back. Next night I sent him with my sister. To see the change there was in that man under the influence of love and kindness was beyond imagining. He is still in my home. We do not like to part with him. He has done more for us than we can tell, and we shall thank God for having sent him to us as long as we live."

The thanksgiving meeting will never be forgotten ; this was the last meeting of the mission, June 30. The tent was crowded everywhere. Mr. J. C. Gibson, Chairman of the Church Council, presided ; all the leaders were there, Dutch and British. A minister representing each Church was chosen to speak and give God thanks for the blessing which had come to Churches and city. There was one touching moment, when the Dutch minister spoke of the 1300 Dutch people who had professed saving faith in Jesus during the mission, and of the quickening life of the ministers and Churches under their charge. Then, before he

sat down, he called upon all the Dutch present who would look back upon the mission as the time of their *new birth*, to rise and sing a psalm in Dutch, and about 1000 rose, and their psalm of thanksgiving reached every heart. There were not many dry eyes among the 3000 people present, and I believe some were saved in those melting moments. For such scenes and waves of power and pathos come from heaven ; they are not man-made, and cannot be reproduced—they are epoch-making. About 3000 in all professed publicly their decision to follow Jesus, by entering the inquiry-room, and there being dealt with by the ministers and representatives of the united Churches ; there were many hundreds more in the quiet of their own hearts and rooms, whom we shall meet in heaven, whose names were not registered among the rest ; for I had a room in town, where I met any who wished to speak to me. In this way I spoke to scores of well-to-do people who wanted to live a life of reality, being tired of the world's glitter and sin.

But I must stop, for the half can never be

told. The whole of the money needed for the expenses was raised by the collections and sales of the chairs and tent at the close of the mission.

I think I ought to say that I had a very pleasant talk with Lord Milner, who invited me to luncheon in Government House. The High Commissioner was much interested in hearing of the results of the mission, and expressed his sympathy with the objects of the work. He would have liked to go to the meetings himself; but when I told him that the Dutch were joining cordially, he was very anxious that his presence should not embarrass them or the work. In order that Government House should not be unrepresented, however, he sent Lord Henry Seymour and two ladies to the meeting, and they sat on the platform. Lord Milner said he had found the influence of the mission telling upon the whole community. On the whole, I had a very interesting talk with his Excellency. The conversation was mainly about the mission, and he scarcely touched on politics. When I asked about Chinese labour, he told me his position with great

frankness. He had been strongly opposed to it at the beginning, and had acquiesced only because the stopping of the mines was already driving British labour out of the country.

I should like to tell a little story I heard from a lady doctor at Cape Town about Lord Milner. During an anxious political crisis this lady went to see him, and found him reading his Bible. As he laid the volume down, he said, "I could never get on without this Book in times of stress and worry."



THE MISSION TENT USED AT JOHANNESBURG AND PRETORIA.

CHAPTER VII

FROM KAFFIRS TO GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

AT the close of the Johannesburg mission we arranged to have a few days' much-needed rest. With this in view, we left Johannesburg on Friday night, July 1, for Pietersburg, two hundred miles further up the country. We arrived there on Saturday morning, at 9.30, and were met by Mr. Halstead, the Wesleyan minister, who at once presented a request from the Dutch and English Churches that I would preach on the Sunday. It was cheering to know that these people were hungry for the Gospel. I could not say no, it was no use ; I had to promise to preach the following day. A few hours were all they had to make the fact known, but it was enough, and on the afternoon and night of Sunday, July 3, the Dutch church

was crowded with about six hundred people. In the two services about one hundred decisions were registered ; a deep and solemn impression was made, and one which will live.

Monday morning early we were up and ready for a long drive of thirty-five miles through the country, to visit the natives as they are in their native state. Arriving at the location late on Monday night, we had supper at a small hotel, and then slept in a mud hut, with mud floor—a very quaint sort of place. I was reminded of my tent of boyhood days, and felt I was a gipsy again. At 7 a.m. the next morning we were amongst the natives in their kraals, received by the chief, M'Phahlele, and his people. They could not have been seen at a better time, for they were breaking up from one of their heathen rites, and were painted up for the occasion. The chief ordered a sheep to be killed, and a feast to be made in our honour. The men began one of their famous dances, while the head wife of the chief beat the drum. Then they sang a weird song as they moved, a strange, wild cry, and their movements were stranger still. Before leaving,



Photo by]

[N. P. Edwards.

KAFFIR WAR DANCE.



DRIVING TO NATIVE LOCATIONS.

we looked round the kraals, picked up a few curios, and were just in time to save the life of the poor sheep, which was to form the feast, for our time would not allow of our remaining longer. We had another little talk with the chief, through an interpreter, who said he and his people were delighted to see us. A big crowd of these dusky men and women gathered, and spread their big eyes to look at us once more ; then they gave a big shout as sort of send-off, and we drove away, wondering who will be the God-given man who will be able to solve this great and growing problem of South Africa—the native question. The drive back to Pietersburg took us all day ; but we arrived in time to catch the 8.30 p.m. train to Pretoria, which place we reached on Wednesday morning.

Then began all the inquiries and preparations which must take place at the eve of a great mission. Rev. J. H. Nield, the Wesleyan minister, who acted as secretary, had made splendid arrangements, which, when carried out, go a long way to the making of any mission a success. The tent which was used in Johannesburg was brought up, together with two

thousand seats ; and although Pretoria has only a population of twenty thousand people, every seat was needed, and needed every night. I think Pretoria was really the hardest bit of work we had had so far in South Africa. Here, in the Government centre of the Transvaal, there are so many officials, and, I am sorry to say, they are most godless. The Government offices, in many cases, are open on Sundays, and *many of the officials are expected to work* on the Lord's Day. I wonder if this is known by the authorities at home ? And they do work. This gives license for other things. Polo, tennis, football, cricket are played all day on the Sunday, by those who would blush to own it at home. And the cry everywhere is that the Army and Government officials have desecrated the South African Sunday, and I am afraid it is true. All this sort of thing crushes the finer and more sensitive parts of a man. Pleasure of the baser sort will soon numb a conscience till it is past feeling. We had this in a very great degree to contend with in Pretoria. The crowds came at once, but there was an absence of reverence on the part of the

British. The Dutch were by far the most reverent and earnest, and gave a ready response. It took a little time to pull the English into full sympathy. There was such opposition from the drink-sellers and theatre-managers ; their business suffered much. A letter is before me from one who says that the manager of one bar told him I had not been in Pretoria twenty-four hours before his sales went down £40. The mission emptied these places while it lasted, at any rate. Wherever the publicans and theatres are robbed of their customers, they rage ; the moment the interests of evil begin to suffer, there is a raging storm ; and just when the Church makes herself felt in this way, persecution will begin again. They even went so far in Pretoria as to send some of the baser sort to interrupt the meetings. But this ends in victory for the Church, and gives to the meetings a cheap advertisement.

The work in Pretoria was deep and searching. All sorts came to the meetings, Dutch and British ; the former were the first to yield. A Boer general and a grandson of the late President Kruger were amongst the inquirers.

A whole football team, a fine set of fellows, who always played their games on Sundays, were converted, and there were many remarkable cases of well-known people about town. In all, nine hundred, young and old, passed through the hands of the workers, and five hundred signed the pledge. The Churches will be strengthened, the work of the pastor far more easy and glad-some, for these times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.

We left Pretoria, Tuesday, July 19, *en route* for Durban. On the way we broke the journey at Ladysmith for two days. We were there welcomed at the station by a large gathering of friends. As the visit was so short it was necessary to utilize every minute, so that as much of interest as possible might be seen—the battle-fields and the many places in this never-to-be-forgotten neighbourhood. Directly after lunch we started to visit Wagon Hill and Cæsar's Camp, which is about half an hour's ride from the town. On our way we saw the cairn raised to the memory of Colonel Dick Cunningham on the spot where he fell, a victim to stray shot. Climbing Wagon Hill, we could see the country



Photo by]

PRETORIA.

[N. P. Edwards.

for miles around, a vast expanse of wild, rocky scenery, including many of the positions held by the British and Boers during the memorable days of the siege—"Gun Hill," Lombard's Kop, Telegraph Hill, Surprise Hill, and Mwbulwand, on which "Long Tom" was placed. Wagon Hill was on January 6 captured three times by the Boers, who on one occasion were within twenty yards of our men. The loss was dreadful—the monuments recently raised to the memory of the fallen Devons and Imperial Light Horse tell the tale of brave men who gave their lives for their country. Sympathy and sadness, mingled with hatred of war, filled our hearts as we uncovered by the graves of the dead.

The friends who accompanied us had been through the siege, and told us thrilling stories of simply wonderful deliverances and escapes, and of the remarkable way Providence interposed for these people. For instance, fruit trees bore such a crop of fruit that year as was never previously known, and trees bore that never had before or since.

The second day of our stay we visited Spion

Kop. Our guide pointed out Mount Alice, from whence Buller fired on to Spion Kop. Here is the place where General Woodgate fell, and the monument raised to Thorneycroft's men, and the trench in which 274 Fusiliers were buried. From the top we could see the spot on the Tugela where Buller's force crossed, and from whence they climbed Spion Kop, a height of 4800 feet. Only here, on the actual spot, can one form any idea of the real difficulties the English had to face, and the number of positions from which the Boers could pour a cross-fire into the brave fellows on this ill-fated height.

CHAPTER VIII

THE GARDEN OF SOUTH AFRICA

OUR visit to Durban was most refreshing after the dust and dryness of the up-country towns. We had been told again and again by those who knew Durban and Natal that we should enjoy our stay in this beautiful place. It is the garden of South Africa ; and if beautiful in winter, what must it be in summer ? But the winter here is very like our English summer, as far as the climate goes ; though of course we have not their wonderful tropical growth in flower and tree. The sea and harbour, the Bluff and the Berea, all tend to charm the eye and make the place attractive. Durban is the most English town we visited, so far as people and customs go.

We arrived on Friday evening, July 22, and

were welcomed by the committee, the mayor, and a host of sympathetic friends. The mayor drove us to the house of our host, who was the Rev. A. W. Cragg, Wesleyan minister, who, by-the-by, was converted, years ago, under the ministry of a step-sister of mine in Stockport. Mr. Cragg organized the mission, and in this capacity did the Churches and people of Durban splendid service. There was not a hitch anywhere from beginning to end.

The Town Hall was secured for the mission—a fine building, holding comfortably about 1800 people. The first meeting was held for workers on Saturday, July 23, when the West Street Wesleyan Church was quite full. Sunday afternoon and night the Town Hall was crowded, and hundreds turned away. The singing, led by two hundred voices and a grand organ, was an inspiration, and made one feel at home. This was the first great organ we had had to lead the singing, so far, in our trip, and I tell you the singing was magnificent. The preaching of the Word was with power, the results were full of promise, and made the workers expect great things. Each day the mission

gained a firmer hold upon the life of the whole city ; men and women of every walk of life were to be seen in the congregations. They had come from far and near ; trains had brought some, while others had trekked fifty and a hundred miles with ox waggons, and stayed all the days of the mission. Many took their holidays in Durban in order to attend the meetings ; but all were repaid in the greatness of the blessings with which they returned home. The numbers in each service of those who publicly declared their decision for Christ grew as the days passed. Hundreds confessed their Lord in the great meeting who did not come into the inquiry-rooms, but to whom it meant just as much, and whose changed lives and work for the Master will soon be seen.

There were many remarkable cases of conversion, backsliders restored, and prayers answered. A family, a whole family converted, save one member, a fine young man in business in Durban, came to the station to see us off at Pretoria. When we left that city, the last thing the mother did was to give me a letter of introduction to her son in Durban, and

to say they would pray for him, and expect to hear God had answered their prayers. The dear fellow was saved the second night of the mission, and before the days passed had brought three or four of his friends to Jesus. A man in a good position, an office-bearer and Church member, came up to me one night, saying, "I have been living a double life, but it must end here and now." He was well known, and it required courage to come out publicly ; but he was brave, and God gave him a great victory. The victory was seen in the light shining in his face. To see the grace of God shine upon a human face is a beautiful sight. I have seen some very plain faces, yea, even ugly, made ugly by a life of sin, so transformed and lit up as to be attractive and lovely. I am often reminded of a story Mr. Jowett told of a man who had been a gaol-bird in Birmingham, and whose face was more like that of a beast than that of a human being ; after his conversion it was changed, so changed as to be likened to an old cathedral. Where sin abounded, grace did abound much more exceedingly. Eight young men from one class were converted. A family of six came into

the inquiry-room, one after the other, and all went away rejoicing. Five of another household, three and four from many others ; fathers and mothers, children, husbands and wives were rejoicing together, as one after another came, saying, "My prayers are answered." *My joy* at such moments is too deep for words ! Surely this is a little bit of the "joy of the Lord." If the joy of seeking—and there is a joy of seeking—be ours, then the joy of finding must be ours also.

The work of conversion was not confined to the Town Hall meetings ; some found the Lord at home, at the office, and at work. In one Sunday school we heard of a hundred young people who gave themselves to Christ, and others in church services, to the delight of pastors and friends. The names of about nine hundred were taken of those who passed through the hands of the workers, and three hundred pledges were taken at the Saturday night gospel temperance meeting. All these pledged themselves, in the most definite and public way, to follow their Lord and be true to Him. As will be readily seen, this is only part of the results.

Who can tabulate the quickened life, backsliders restored, strength renewed, lost joy found, friends reconciled, wavering faith established, the old pathos found, smouldering fires fanned into a flame, the old wells cleaned out and giving again the refreshing water of eternal life, the Church prayer-meetings well attended, and the pastor preaching with all the fire and power of his first love? Can anybody estimate all these things? And all these are in a mission, when properly entered into and wisely conducted. I wish some of the critics of missions, and those who do not understand the work, could have been at the thanksgiving service at Durban, and heard the ministers tell how their hearts had been cheered, and their own spiritual life changed, as they had witnessed the triumphs of the Cross, and seen those for whom they had nearly given up hope coming into the light and surrendering themselves fully to God. One spoke of the converts being the right kind—they were praying, speaking, and working converts. Another said his church family had been wonderfully increased, and this meant increased responsibility, attention, and devotion.

Another said he was going to preach the old Gospel with a new note and a new power, and that the people must look out. Another said he meant to look for results Sunday by Sunday. Hope and heart predominated in every one, and the future is looked forward to with a confidence in God never known before. When at the close of the meeting I asked for those who would like to testify to blessing received to stand, about 1600 rose *en masse*. Then together we dedicated ourselves to God, to follow where He should lead, in a parting prayer, and the mission closed with the Doxology, and "God be with you till we meet again."

Many notable people attended the mission, including Sir Henry and Lady Bale, Sir Benjamin and Lady Greenacre and family, Sir David Hunter, the Mayor and Mayoress, Episcopal clergymen, the Jewish Rabbi, and other prominent citizens, who took a very deep interest in the mission. The two daily papers, the *Mercury* and *Advertiser*, were very sympathetic, and gave good accounts of the meetings, and so helped me to reach a much larger congregation. We lunched with his Excellency

the Administrator at the marine residence ; we took tea with Sir Benjamin and Lady Greenacre ; reviewed the Art Gallery with his Worship the Mayor ; saw sugar-making at Mount Edgecombe with the Hon. Marshall Campbell ; the manufacture of arrowroot at Umgeni, with Mr. W. Buttery ; the Indian depôt at the point, with the Indian Protector, Mr. J. A. Polkinhorne ; visited the social farm of the Salvation Army at the South Junction ; the Trappists Monastery at Marian Hill ; and spent a night at Amanzimtoti with the American mission, where a meeting with the natives was arranged—of course we spoke through an interpreter. How delighted these people were as we spoke and sang to them ! How their eyes filled and overflowed as they listened ! And then one dear old man got up and told us how glad they were to hear the “Great Words of Life” from one coming from so far away. He said, “Umfundise, your words agree with those we have heard from our own missionaries, and we thank God for this day.” We were so glad to be privileged to cheer these godly men and women, who are doing such noble work among



Photo by]

[N. P. Edwards.

TOWN HALL, DURBAN.



TOWN HALL, PIETERMARITZBURG.

the heathen of this land, in saving, teaching, and training some to be evangelists to their own people. Some of the converts suffer untold persecutions for Christ's sake. The day we were there we shook hands with a girl in heathen dress, which means very little in the way of clothing. She had been in the school some time before, but had been taken away by her father, and stripped and left naked in the bush till she was willing to put on her heathen clothes again, and to stay in the kraal. She had waited and watched for her chance, till finally she had run away back to the mission, and had just arrived when we got there. The missionaries were arranging to send her to another school, some distance away, where she would have a chance for this world and the next. Only think of this heathen girl, with the little she knew of Jesus, being ready to suffer for her Lord ; and there are tens of thousands in all lands ready to do the same if called upon to-day. For I am old-fashioned enough to believe that the world is getting better, the heaven is in the lump, the salt is preserving, sweetening, and purifying, and the light is

shining. There are more loving and loyal followers of Jesus Christ to-day in the world than ever before. We are living in the twilight of the coming glory, and if I am not allowed to add a faggot to the beacon fires of eternal victory, if I live well, and work well, I shall be allowed to stand and view it from the hilltops of the homeland, and shout "Hallelujah!" as the warriors come home from the fight.

CHAPTER IX

OFFENDING THE LIQUOR INTERESTS

NATAL's deep valleys ; wild, rocky ravines ; high and often table-topped hills and mountains ; its beautiful rivers, though none navigable ; its picturesque waterfalls ; and, in summer, its many wild flowers ; its sugar, banana, and pineapple plantations ; its orange, lemon, and naartje groves, and many other tropical flowers and fruits, all delight the lover of natural beauty. The climate in winter is healthful and delightful sunshine, all day and every day, scarcely ever a cloud to be seen ; and the nights are a dream. The weather all through our tour was perfect ; we had only five or six days in which we had any rain.

Pietermaritzburg is the seat of the Government of Natal. Here magnificent buildings

meet the eye in every principal street, the most conspicuous being the Houses of Parliament, Colonial offices, and the new Town Hall. There is also a fine park, through which the river Umsindusi winds its peaceful way. I think they say the population is from 14,000 to 15,000 white people, besides the natives. There are fine wide streets, lit up with electric light, and the corporation are now laying down an electric tram system to cost £100,000. The Y.M.C.A. has just completed a fine block of buildings, costing, I think, £30,000. The Town Hall is the finest in South Africa, with an organ costing from eight to ten thousand pounds. This building was the meeting-ground for the mission.

In this city we encountered the most bitter opposition from the people in the liquor, theatrical, and gambling circles. Everywhere in this country where the mission was held these people were hit hard ; theatres and beer-shops, if not emptied, were left by thousands, to attend the meetings. I was slandered and abused by the papers representing these interests as the "King of Bunkum," "A

Fraud," "The biggest humbug that ever came to South Africa." Some of my words were twisted into all sorts of meanings; the foulest lies that could be told were circulated. Actors and liquor-sellers filled some of the papers with letters of abuse, and such abuse that the papers at home would not allow. This began in Johannesburg, raged in Pretoria, foamed at the mouth in Durban, and went clean mad in Pietermaritzburg. It really was so bad that I began to fear for the mission, for it was the talk of the city before I began, or had even arrived; and as I did not reply, or refer to it in any way, the man in the street began to believe it, and said he would not listen to one who could not contradict what was being said. The *Natal Times*, the Maritzburg evening paper, took the hostile side, and boiled over with rage; the *Natal Witness*, the morning daily, before saying anything for or against, wrote off to me at Durban, asking if I would send a message to the citizens of Maritzburg through their columns. I replied, asking that a representative should meet me as soon as I arrived in the city, to whom I dictated a message,

setting forth my object and hope for the mission. I also gave the lie to many slanderous statements which had been circulated. This went forth in the Friday's issue before the mission began.

The following night I met the workers, and I had a little suspicion that even they had lost heart at the wildness of the storm which our success had occasioned ; and I am bound to say it was a new experience for me. Still, my hope was in God ; I knew He would not forsake me, and I was prepared to look a fool, and to be a fool, if He could be honoured and glorified. Sunday brought a tremendous crowd, mostly men, at four o'clock, to the Town Hall. At first it was difficult to get them to sing really well ; they were cold, icy, critical. One could feel it ; the atmosphere was full of it, one could have cut it. But we went on as though all and everybody were in fullest sympathy with us, trusting in God to fulfil His "I will be with thee ; be not afraid of their faces." I preached as if I could hear my Lord behind me, saying, "I am here ; go on, be faithful, victory is yours." And presently

the ice melted, the clouds rolled away ; these men were gripped heart and mind ; tears were flowing, and many a man wept in that service who had not shed a tear since he was whipped. It was a great victory for my Lord. The night meeting was a pack, and from start to finish we knew the Lord of all was with His own word, convincing of sin and righteousness, and about one hundred entered the inquiry-rooms, for prayer and personal dealing, in response to the first invitation. Again God vindicated His own, and honoured His word, in spite of the raging of those who hate the truth and reject His Son. Monday morning the *Natal Witness* had five columns all in sympathy ; the *Times* had a column reporting the beginning of the mission in a very friendly way. Among other things, it said that "Gipsy Smith was the biggest draw in South Africa." From this day, the victory of the mission was sure.

As I write quietly here, and think of some of the things that were said, I wonder if I ought not to be grateful for cheap advertisement. One man, whose business had evidently suffered, wrote from Durban to the *Maritzburg Times*,

and began his letter by saying, "Gipsy Smith left Durban this morning, thank goodness! We shall get a little peace now." I wonder if he will. You may get rid of the prophet, but can you get rid of the message of his Master? On one of the large posters near where we were staying, some one had written, in a good hand, in large letters, "Keep away from this bloke; he is dangerous." Another had written in chalk on a door, "Vote for Gipsy Smith and no beer." All these things kept the mission to the fore, and made people talk of it—indeed, they talked of little else; and certainly the crowds came. It was estimated that we had a seventh of the white population attending the mission every night. Those who think and say that the Gospel is played out ought to see these crowds! Here is a quotation from the *Durban Mercury*—

"The oft-repeated debate on the relative power of the pulpit and the stage receives an uncommon illustration in yesterday's *Witness*, which says, 'there was another enormous crowd at the Gipsy Smith meeting last night,' whilst at the theatre there was only a moderately filled house."

Again and again we have proved that nothing holds and attracts the people like Christ and His gospel, and every sort of man is drawn when we are in dead earnest. We may have to break new ground, and get out of the well-worn ruts. It takes a lot to move some folk ; but there are weak spots where they least expect them, and our business is to find them. Oh ! the diversity of my congregations in this country—hundreds of different types ; and men and women who belong to no type. They are all in front of me—smart, shoddy, scholarly, ignorant, honest, dishonest, those who are trying to live for God, and those who boast they are living for the world ; men and women with a past ; those who have had their chance and thrown it away, and those who have never had a chance. But the truth, living in the heart, told out simply, and in the power of the Spirit, finds the conscience and the heart, and commands attention, and both are turned to God and His way. Nowhere was this seen more than in Maritzburg. About one thousand people passed through the inquiry-rooms, or about one in every fourteen of the white

population. Some of these came to scoff, and remained to pray ; others, filled with their prejudices, were disarmed.

Here is a letter, which says, "Praise the Lord for two men who came to the mission with prejudices as bitter as gall. Both were converted in the first meeting they attended. My tears of grief are turned into tears of joy." A gentleman who had passed through the whole of the mission at Durban, and had not yielded himself to Christ, but knew he ought, could not rest, so he took a holiday and came up to Maritzburg, and, in the last day of his stay there, came into the full liberty of the sons of God, and went off rejoicing to tell his friends what great things the Lord had done for him. A most remarkable case was that of a man of some means, who had suffered from religious mania for about three years ; a burden to himself and a sorrow to his friends. It was very sad to see him going to and from the ministers' houses, asking them, and whoever he could find, to pray with him, and to hear him cry, "I am lost ! There is no hope for me ; God has given me up, as a punishment for my

sin." This poor fellow sent me a letter asking for our prayers. We prayed for him publicly. The night following, I was preaching on the man in the tombs. God wondrously applied the truth to the heart and mind of this poor man, and the clouds were broken after those many months. His sorrow and sin, chains and darkness, flew away in the presence of the mighty Deliverer, and the man went home clothed and in his right mind. All who knew him could but stand and wonder at the mighty power of God, as they heard him say, "He saves ! He saves to the uttermost ! Praise the Lord !" Here is a telegram which reached me from one holding a very prominent official position in Maritzburg, who came back to God after years of backsliding, and from whom the Church will hear shortly, for he possesses great and powerful gifts : "God bless you and yours, dear brother, and your next mission."

A lady with a wonderful voice, the leading vocal teacher for Durban and Maritzburg, gave herself to Jesus, and is just longing to use her voice in the service of her Lord. This beautiful gift will be heard later singing sermons set

to music. A churchman wrote, "I want to thank you for your message, and I am speaking for many churchmen, who, despite the fact that we may not agree with all the methods you employ, still are unwilling that you should leave us without acquainting you of the very real and lasting impression your words and life have made upon them, and we want to thank you for the generous tribute you have paid to some of our clergymen. We are better men, and we shall ever thank God for you."

A father, old and grey, griped my hand and said, "Thank God for prayers answered. My seven children have all been converted under your ministry. I have prayed for some of them forty years. They have all given themselves to God during your mission. I have come a journey to look into the face and shake the hand of the man whom God has used to bring joy to this poor old heart, and to let me see and know my prayers have been heard and are now answered. Now I can go 'home,' and I feel like saying, 'Now, Lord, let Thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation.' I can leave my children

without fear or care, since I know they are the Lord's." Can I ever forget that dear old face? To look into it and hear those words and catch the inspiration of them was worth a life's work! A young man, who waited to say good-bye at a little station we passed through, writes to say he could not speak of all that was in his heart, so he felt he must write to tell me of the great blessing he had received. He says that six had been converted from this small station, and many others deeply impressed. A gentleman who attended the meetings at Maritzburg felt himself called to work for God. He returned to his home, and writes that they have had some glorious meetings, one being a gospel temperance meeting, in which fifty—many of them young people—took the pledge. Also that the way has been opened for him to go to America, where he will consecrate his own life, working for God among his people, he being a German. The following testimony is worth quoting:—

"You will remember our conversation in the train *re* the gentleman who robbed his firm some years ago, and had been imprisoned, and

since his release had gone into business, and in his own way was trying to live the past down, but felt he was slighted, even, he said, by members of his own church? Well, he stood up at your last service, when you asked those to stand up who had received good, and he was advised to make a public confession. You were to pray for him last evening. I delivered your message, and although he had not made up his mind to come to the meeting, this loving, sympathetic message from you decided him. He came with his wife, who is a good Christian woman, made his confession, which created quite a sensation. Glory to God for answered prayer, and for bringing him back. We met him this morning with the firm's representative, and went to a tea-room and had a cup of tea together. They shook hands and made friends. Hitherto they have been at bitter enmity, but people's hearts are so melted they can forgive the greatest wrong just now.

"We had a grand meeting in our church. It was nearly full, and there was no waiting. One after the other got up to testify to the good they had received. The young people are just

splendid, and are all anxious to meet in class. The change is wonderful. God has honoured you ; may He do so more and more is the continued prayer of those here, whose hearts' affection you have won, and will ever retain."

The unity of the Churches here was beautiful indeed ; no one cared to stop to ask to what Church did one belong. We felt a deeper and a stronger bond—the bond of a brotherhood rooted and built in Christ Jesus, which laughs at creeds and sectarianisms and names of man's making, for we have got into the circle where "Christ is all and in all ;" and this spirit is spreading all over South Africa. Ministers and Churches, which had been divided so long, came together.

A letter is before me which tells of a great victory along this line. Let me give it in brief. In a town sixty-four miles from Maritzburg they had read of, and felt, the power of this sweeping revival. The Wesleyan and Dutch ministers were set thinking by the Spirit, who works so strangely in human hearts. They were both exercised about Gipsy Smith and his work. They had not been friendly since the war.

It is sad, but it was so. The Dutch minister called his people together, and he spoke very faithfully to them, and asked them if they did not think that their bitterness against the British was hindering the work of God in their hearts. Then he begged them to put it away, as he desired to do. Then he went to the study of the Methodist preacher, and they talked and prayed together. United prayer-meetings were arranged, and doubtless are still being held, in which the people are meeting together for prayer and fellowship once more, and are forgetting the sin and bitterness of the past in their longing after God. And this letter, which is an earnest, pleading invitation to me to go to help them, if only for one or two days, is signed by the Wesleyan minister and office-bearers, and the Dutch minister and his "Kirkeraat." So the mission went out into towns and centres, scores and hundreds of miles away from the places we had been able to visit, and the effect was seen in many unexpected ways, but ways which compel recognition.

At Maritzburg, as in other places, the



Jinricksha.



Trolley Car on Railway.

TWO MODES OF LOCOMOTION.

leading people attended the mission, Sir Liege and Lady Hulett—Sir Liege being the late Speaker of the House—the Chief Justice and Mrs. Finnemore being present. The Chief Justice gave a little dinner in my honour at the club, to which he invited the leading men of the city. Judge Boshoff and Mrs. Boshoff; the vicar of St. Peter's, Rev. and Mrs. de Bourneville; Mr. Samuelson, the Secretary for Native Affairs, and many others, were also amongst those at the meetings. Hundreds of those who never think of going to church were constantly at the mission. Two gentlemen of means told me they had never been to church or heard a sermon for years; one said ten, and the other six. The blessing in this city was very great; may it abide! It will if it be followed up lovingly, wisely, and prayerfully.

We had a very enjoyable day at Edendale. This is a Methodist native mission station, about seven miles from Maritzburg, under the superintendence of Rev. Morris. We drove out early in the morning, arriving at Edendale about 11.30, and found already a large number of native ministers, who had come in from the

surrounding districts to welcome us, as well as two native chiefs and four or five hundred of the Christian natives. The church was soon full, and a service was quickly on the way. One could feel in the heartiness and warmth of the atmosphere that a splendid work is going on amongst these people. They knew how to sing, and the singing was worth going twenty miles to hear, and they knew what they were singing. This part of the service was truly grand. The deep bass voices of the men sounded like the low rumbling of a dying storm far away, rich, round, and full—Nature's own wild production. Mr. Morris, who presided, called upon a native minister to pray, and the dear old man led us all into the very presence of the King. Some of us could not understand the words, but we could feel. Like the blind boy, who, when flying a kite, was asked by some one what pleasure he found when he could not see it, replied, "I cannot see, but I can feel it pull, sir!" And we could feel the pull of that dear old native brother's prayer. Then I was asked to speak to them, a young native minister undertaking to interpret

my words. The words seemed to fall like a gentle shower on thirsty soil. These people listened, and as they listened their eyes grew moist. There was no inattention with them ; they were eager for every word, and for more words, and for as long as you like, for they are never in a hurry. If I could have a good interpreter, one who would get accustomed to my method of speech, and I could spend the time among the natives, then I feel confident thousands of them would be converted from heathenism to God. These people do so appeal to me, these big, grown-up children, so full of simplicity and fun, with their big black eyes, like wells of liquid light, their white teeth and ebony skin, their peculiar tastes, and their love of jewellery. And anything is an ornament to them—buttons, beads, bones, feathers, forks, combs, coils of copper, brass, and galvanized wire round their arms and legs, brass buckles from harness ; everything is used. I even saw one with six or eight brass safety-pins in each ear. It seems whatever they possess they wear all at once. The ornaments belonging to one woman when taken off weighed

seventeen pounds ! Fancy carrying that about all day and every day ! One day, when driving, we passed two native women, very well dressed, and they bowed most graciously. I at once raised my hat, for I thought they must recognize me. They were so delighted they began to laugh, until they rolled on the ground with delight, and waved and danced as far as they could see us. It was most amusing. A friend told me a story of one boy whom he knew, and had known for years. The boy worked for a friend of his, who was a very bad-tempered man at times, and thought nothing of thrashing the boys if they were not behaving themselves. One day he met this boy, and said to him, "Well, Sam, how is your boss?" The boy turned and looked at him, and answered, "He got *plenty debil*, boss. That's how he am." Some time passed, and he met the same boy again. "Well," said my friend, "how is your boss now, Sam?" Sam replied, with a knowing toss of his head, "He got *picannini debil*, now, boss," meaning that his master was growing older, and was not so headstrong and boisterous as formerly. Then my friend said to Sam, "I

hear your friend (another native boy) is converted, and has started to preach. He is a good fellow, is he not?" Sam answered, "Well, boss, he talk mighty good, but I can't see inside ; I don't know, boss." I wonder how we all look to Him who can see inside ?

One of the real joys of this trip has been the fact that so many of the coloured people have been brought to the light. Here is part of a letter written by a native woman, who was brought to God in Maritzburg with her four children, and in the letter she enclosed two pounds, and this is what she says about it : "I thank my God for what He has brought to me and my children through you. We have such a happy home since the mission. Praise the Lord ! I send you two pounds, not to go into the collection for the Gipsy Mission which was taken at the doors at the close of the lecture, but for you, when you get home, to buy Bibles, and give them to poor little gipsy children in your country who have no Bible ; and tell them they were sent by a coloured woman in South Africa, who was converted through the services of Gipsy Smith, the evangelist, and

feels she owes a debt to other gipsies, and would like to pay it back in this way, and she will pray that God's work may bring light and salvation." I do not think I ever had anything which touched me more than this. It may be that this woman's gift and prayer may result in bringing some gipsy boy to Christ, who will take up the flag when I lay it down, and hold it up with a dignity and power that will help to bless the world.

CHAPTER X

GOSPEL TEMPERANCE WORK AT EAST LONDON

WE left Maritzburg on Wednesday, August 17, by the 9 a.m. train for Durban. A great host came to see us off, a large number being new converts. Praise and joy, fruits of the new life, could be seen in every face. Some of those who have been mightily convicted, but did not yield during the mission, came to the station. As they shook hands, they said, "Don't cease to pray for me ; I will never rest till I find the light." Five or six men, fine fellows, came and left this last message with me. May they soon be saved ! I will believe for them ; yea, I will trust that ere this they have got into the light. What a crowd of converts, workers, committee, ministers, friends, sympathizers, and a host of onlookers, all

mingling together, singing, "Count your blessings," "God be with you," and, as the train steamed out of the station, the Doxology! After a run of four hours in the train, we were received at Durban by the President and Secretary of the Durban Church Council. Mr. C. C. Clark sent his motor-car to convey us to the Wesleyan parsonage, Stamford Hill, the home of the Rev. A. W. Cragg, where we stayed for the night. The next morning, a big crowd gathered at the Point between nine and ten to say farewell, when we embarked on the good ship *Saxon*. His Worship the Mayor, and Lady Mayoress, the Town Clerk, the Town Treasurer, the President of the Church Council, past Presidents and Secretary, together with the Executive, many ministers, workers, and converts, the mission choir, and gentlemen of the town—many hundreds, all told, were there; and as the boat glided away from her moorings we could catch the strains of "God be with you." As I gazed on the faces of the people and the fair city at the back of them, and thought of all the experiences of beautiful Natal, I could not help praising God

for the high and peculiar honour he has condescended to place upon one so unworthy, "unto me, who am less than the least of all saints is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." Many may preach the Gospel better than I can, but they cannot preach a *better gospel*. Oh! to preach the old Gospel story more and more, in all its fulness, grandeur, and eternity, in all the power of the Holy Spirit! What a difference it makes when we preach in the demonstration of the Spirit and of power! The Gospel is known, so far as the letter is concerned, as well to-day as Paul or Peter or John, or Whitfield or Wesley knew it; but do we preach it with the same mighty power and passion? Have we the same intense soul hunger, the same travail of spirit? We know it; yes, the theory, the theology, but do we feel it? Is it part of us, our meat and drink, our all and all, the one great overmastering passion to cry, "Behold the Lamb"? Do we live to think and pray and work, to focus everything, every thought, power, and desire, to bring men to Jesus Christ? Oh! for the

old flame of God and His soul-saving Gospel to take possession of us all ! I am sure this is the secret of soul saving, and without this experience preaching may be, and more often is, the savour of death. A living Holy Ghost sermon will make living hearers.

After a short but delightful sea passage, we arrived at East London on Friday morning, August 19, and found the President and members of the Church Council awaiting us. We were soon heartily welcomed and conveyed to our hosts. A meeting of ministers was arranged for the afternoon, when the whole of the plans for the mission were gone into. Every minister was most anxious and hearty for the success of the mission. Much prayer and work had been put into the preparations, and everybody seemed full of expectations that God would pour out upon East London a great wave of quickening and revival. The workers' meeting on Saturday night, although the rain was falling, was delightful, quite twelve hundred being present. After welcome, conference, and instruction to workers, the meeting closed in a joyous sense of victory close at

hand. The rain still fell all day on Sunday, but the people were determined nothing should hinder their coming, and the Town Hall was well filled. I was graciously helped in choosing the right themes for those who were present. From the beginning, mighty power was in our midst, to search the heart, awaken the conscience, enlighten the judgment, and bow the will ; and at the close of the first day a large number filled the inquiry-rooms, asking the question which is dear to earth and heaven, "What must I do to be saved?" All sorts and conditions of British and Dutch were among the number. Each day the interest and power resting upon the meetings became more and more evident. The silence of the crowds, the eager upturned faces, the leaning forward to catch every word, the tears falling like gentle rain, all told of the inward working of the mighty Spirit, bringing back buried and half-forgotten memories, unconfessed sins, wrongs that demand to be put right, wounds which cry out for the healing hand, cruel words which must be taken back, or, if that is impossible, told to God ; restoration and restitution which have to be faced ; duty

stamped in the old home far away ; mothers, fathers, wives, and children, in some cases, deserted and left to die, without the knowledge of where those they love may be ;—all these things are back to the light, as conscience and judgment are set working, by Him who cannot look upon sin and wrong of any kind with the least degree of allowance. And when the light of God streams upon a naked conscience, I tell you, it blisters, until there is a cry for help and God. The longer I preach, the more I believe we have to help people to see that sin is no skin disease, but a deep, blood and bone malady, going down into the vitals of a man, into the very heart of him, so bad, so dark, so destroying, so damning, that only Calvary and God can cure. Sin cannot be treated lightly. We must see sin, the sinfulness of it, if we are to value the remedy. We must not make salvation too easy, or we shall dishonour God and His Christ. And so these men and women, and all men and women, must be told the truth about their sin. It is my business to bring it home to them until they are pricked in their hearts, as the people

were on the day of Pentecost. I know this will raise temper and devil, in the Church and out of it, and bring abuse, hatred, and bitter opposition. No matter ; I have, as a servant of Jesus Christ, to make the enemies of the Cross see and feel sin. And on this trip I made an honest attempt to do this. The results all along the line have proved that God will honour the faithful declaration of His Word ; and in East London, as elsewhere, the power of God in the Word of God was life and salvation to hundreds.

The Saturday night gospel temperance meeting must be one of the features of my missions, I think, for the future ; I have seen such blessed things happen as the result of this meeting in South Africa. Temperance workers, who have borne the heat and burden of the day, and have, in many cases, stood nearly alone, have been greatly cheered, and their cause wonderfully strengthened in every place. The temperance societies have been doubled, and many new Good Templar lodges started. The Grand Templar for the Eastern Province told me, " So good has been the effect

of the missions already conducted in other parts of the country, that over five hundred members have been enrolled in the various lodges of the Eastern Province alone, and as the result of this mission the temperance cause in South Africa will be stronger than ever before." Many of the leading people in the Churches were among the first to sign the pledge. The meeting on the Saturday was glorious ; the hall crowded, the singing fine ; two short addresses from local friends, which were much enjoyed ; then I followed. When I asked those to rise who, for Christ's sake and their weak brother's sake, would sign the pledge, they did so in scores, amidst the joyous cheers of the congregation. The meeting was simply thrilled to its very centre as they walked to the tables to sign the cards. A child brought her father, mothers brought their sons, and wives their husbands ; husbands and wives came together ; young men came in groups of five, six, eight, and ten ; a batch of about fifty came at once from the choir ; and then an old toper, well known, came out and took the pledge, while the hall rang with shouts of " Praise the

Lord!" Two or three old grey heads came from near the platform; but I cannot describe the scene. It was a great night for God, for home, and the Church. May the pledge be the step which brings a new life! Just before the meeting closed I saw many of the Good Templars, with their regalia, sitting about the hall, and I was impressed that there might be some of these, while Good Templars, who had not taken the important step of giving themselves to Christ; they had become sober, but not saved. I could not help making an appeal, there and then, to all who would stand up for Christ in that way to testify of their surrender and decision to be His. Many men, wearing the bright colours of the temperance orders, in that crowded meeting responded boldly. It was a grand sight, and one we shall remember with joy. A backslider of thirty years, who was well connected in Manchester years ago, and bears a well-known and honoured name in Methodism, signed the pledge that night. He came to see me the next day, and I had to stop my work to kneel and pray, and help this poor wanderer back to God. So may it be with

many others who tried to turn their back on the drink that night ; in their sober moments may they listen to the voice of the Spirit calling ; and obeying, they shall be saved. Truly this meeting was wonderful ; the stream flowed on until 380 had signed the pledge. The meeting closed in a triumphant song of praise. We were sorry to say good night. Everybody was eager and ready for the last Sunday, and it was a day never to be forgotten. The address in the afternoon was specially to help Christians. It was a time of heart humbling and holy resolve to be more consecrated and out and out for Christ. At night, the hall was crowded long before the advertised hour to commence. All round the walls, upstairs and down, a row of men stood three and four deep. These I called my "wall-flowers." It seemed that every minute of the meeting the impression deepened. Hearts and wills were bowed before God ; scores and hundreds must have surrendered to God in the silent moments of prayer which followed the address. The workers were soon busy with groups of anxious ones ; men and women and families, young



MYSELF AND WIFE AT PRETORIA, DRIVING WITH A GRANDDAUGHTER
OF AN OLD FRIEND.

and old, men and boys, all seeking the pardon of sin, and power to live for God. These are the sights which make preaching delightful. The stories of some are too bitter and sad to put into words. Sin of every name has been written large in some of these lives who were struggling back to God, bearing the marks of a thousand conflicts, and the stains of crimson upon them. But we have the Saviour, who saves to the uttermost, to take them to. "No sinner ere sought Him in vain ; to His promise no limit is made." This is our confidence : "Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out." *Whosoever*: that is our gospel, and the gospel of Calvary. Hope for the worst ; the furthest off may come back, sinners by choice, and aliens by birth ; those who have no hope and are without God in the world—these, yes, a thousand times over—these may come, for "when we were sinners, Christ died for us."

The mission got hold of the city. One could not go anywhere, or meet anybody, without hearing of some blessed victory over the world and sin. God has indeed done great things for East London. One minister told me of 275

new converts that had expressed a desire to join his church, adding, "My brother, you have set me up."

The ministers asked me to meet them in conference and prayer before I left East London, and a most delightful time we had. It was a real old-fashioned class-meeting, as one after the other told of the wonderful things God had done for them in this mission. Our hearts burned within us, and every man thanked God for that hour. One thing is certain—these men will have a passion for the souls of men to a far greater extent than they have had before ; they will stir up the gift within them, and henceforth will look for definite results under their own ministry. This is one of the best results—to discover the evangelist in the pastor. Oh, to do the work of the evangelist in every pulpit in the land !

A leading official in one of the churches told me that he set his mind and heart on six men in the town, whom he wished to see converted before the mission came to a close ; five of them were converted, and he is happy, and so are they. Testimonies reached me from all

directions of marvellous upheavals that have taken place in all grades of society, and the feeling was abroad that in a very special manner the kingdom of heaven is at hand. The Churches in the town throbbed with the vigour of revival and rejoiced in the Divine blessing. People came long distances. A party of Dutch friends came from up-country, a distance of two hundred miles, and stayed the whole of the mission. Ministers came fifty, a hundred, and a hundred and fifty miles, and went back to their work, refreshed with the gladness and inspiration of the mission. Everywhere life wears a different face, and has new meanings for many.

A gentleman and his wife were so anxious about the conversion of their daughter, a fine, bright girl of about sixteen, that they kept her from school a whole term, in order that she might be at home during the mission, and so be able to attend. They both prayed most earnestly for her, and looked confidently for a whole-hearted decision for Christ. It is needless to say that their prayer and wisdom were rewarded in the clear, beautiful conversion of this sweet young life to God.

Here is an example for others to put the spiritual claims, Christ's claims, before everything else ; and when we do this, we may look for God to answer our prayer and to save our children. But, alas ! it is too often the other way ; everything else gets in before God and His concerns—self-interest, pleasure, getting on, friends, social reputation, pastimes, and a thousand other things, crowd God back and out of the life of a youth or a girl. And more often professedly Christian people take their children to the world, and give them a taste for it, and really create the desire for a worldly life. Then, when the young man or woman has cultivated the taste for sin, and the world, drink, theatre, dancing, and often gambling and fast living, have driven God and desire for God and His Church out of their heart and life, and they have gone all wrong, how many mothers have come to me with the request, "Pray for my child," and have had to confess they are wickedly to blame ! It is no good to blame the devil for taking the vacant place in your child's heart. You should not make the heart vacant by crowding God out. This is done when you

force your child into company, scenes, and influences, which can only end one way—no God, and ruin.

A fine young fellow—a German—was converted in this mission. The same night he went home and told his father of his new-found joy, and of his determination henceforth to live a life which would be pleasing to God. His father was a very godless man ; his rage became so furious he thrashed his son and sent him to bed, telling him he was not to talk that way in his house, and not to attend the mission again. He came again the next night, and went home and told his father gently, but firmly, that he had been to the mission, and that his mind was made up to be a Christian. He received another thrashing, and was again sent to bed. The next night he was at the service again, and told his father on his return home, “I have been to the mission, and I mean to go, for I cannot but be true to Him who died for me.” The father said, “Well, you may go, but do not talk about your religion at home.” I believe that this father will be converted through the son’s courage and devotion to his Lord.

A wonderful conversion was that of a man who is well known, for he has been a confirmed drunkard for twenty or twenty-five years ; he is now sober, straight, and rejoicing in victory over his old enemy. A very refined young man spoke to me towards the end of the mission, and said, "Sir, when you were in Bromley, eighteen months ago, my sister was converted ; she did all a sister could do to bring me under your influence, but I refused to come near you. When I came out here I promised mother I would turn over a new leaf, but I have forgotten that promise ; but to-night I am a new man. Thank God ! And by the next mail, I am writing to tell them that I have found the pearl of great price." This dear fellow brought four of his companions to Christ before the mission was ended. A husband and wife—Roman Catholics—came out one night together, and were made blessedly happy as they went away rejoicing in John i. 12 : "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His Name." One curate of the town called on me to tell me of blessing felt

among his parishioners, and asked for hints to begin a prayer-meeting, and as to how it should be managed. Another friend wrote, telling of a mother, now in heaven, who was converted in Manchester some years ago under my ministry, saying she used to write in every letter something of her desire for her boy. Now he knows his mother's God. "Don't you see what a link you have been between my dear mother and myself? How could I keep away or resist your pleading?" So ends his letter.

Another letter tells the joyful fact that eighteen from one Sunday school were converted. Another said, "Six of my own children and seven of my Sunday school class are converted." A sad letter came from one, who said, "I am doing many things which Christians of the worldly sort tell me are not wrong, but I know my conscience tells me that I must surrender if I am to honour God. I have been a wanderer for years; left home fifteen years ago; have never heard from home. I cannot tell, and I cannot find out, where my mother is, and whether she is dead or alive. I am married, with children of my own, and I

have a father's heart, and often, in the stillness of the night, I lie awake, and think of my sin. My heart, so hungry, cries out, 'Mother,' and for all I know, she may be crying out, 'Ernest.' Will I ever see her again? Shall I meet her in heaven? I must be saved, and I will be. Though you go away from our town, you will live in my memory and heart. Pray for me, for I promise you and God to be a good man, so that some day I may meet my darling mother in heaven."

These are samples of letters which came to hand. God has done wonderful things; over eight hundred publicly gave themselves to Christ in this mission, and we know of many more who have taken this step in their own homes. I heard of a leading man in town who went to his pastor, and said, "Put my name down, sir; I am now decided. I have thought over it long, but in this mission the step has been taken, and I mean to join the Church, for my own sake and the sake of my family and those about me."

The mission closed on Tuesday, August 30, with meetings in St. George's Presbyterian

and the Wesleyan Churches. Both were crowded. Testimony and praise were the order. Ministers, office-bearers, members, all told of renewed life, victory gained, and joy in answered prayer. Many new converts, old and young, added their words of thanksgiving for what God had done for them. The old man and the child of tender years, both were heard with moist eyes by the large congregations. I spoke a few words at both meetings, to the Church and to the converts. Then the mission came to a close in an appeal to those who were still lingering, and many in both churches sealed the closing moments of a wonderful mission with their decision to live for God.

May all be kept !

CHAPTER XI

PORT ELIZABETH

ON Friday afternoon, September 2, we left East London *en route* for Port Elizabeth by the *Armada* Castle. A large gathering of friends came to the wharf to see us away, and while waiting for the tug to take us off, we learned two or three things, too good to be left untold.

An old man, the father of thirteen sons and daughters, all grown up and now in homes of their own, said, "I want to tell you something before you go ; I may never see you again on earth, but I shall meet you when the roll is called up yonder. Till your mission in this country, not one of my children was converted, although I had prayed so long and so often for them all. We read the Bible through three times together at family prayer. My heart

has often been sore that not one had yielded to Christ. About a year ago, I got as many of them together as I could, and told them I was afraid that my unfaithfulness had hindered them, and if so, I was sorry for my inconsistency ; and begged them to forgive me, and for Jesus' sake to give up their sin, to turn to God, and so give joy to their old father before death should part us. I then wrote to all who could not be with us on this occasion in the same strain, and then gave myself to prayer as I had never done before. I told them the Gipsy Smith Mission was coming on, and that I hoped this would be the time when my prayers for them would be answered, and that God would be glorified in their conversion. I felt, as the time came on for you to come, sir, that something would and must happen. Most of the boys are in Johannesburg, and when you got there, how I poured out my soul before God for the boys and their wives ; and oh, glad joy ! thank God, to-day there are nine sons and eight wives who have given themselves to God, making seventeen children born again ; and to crown all, this very morning

my dear old wife, who is their mother, and has been spared to me all these years, while getting up, in the bedroom, said, 'Father, it is no use, I must be saved too ;' and we knelt down just then, and the blessed Jesus took her into the fold ; so that there are eighteen in Johannesburg and here in East London, as the result of your mission, rejoicing in Christ, and some day we will welcome you home, should we go first, to be your crown and reward."

Another striking case was that of a man who had not been to church for many years, and had not looked into a Bible for twenty-five years. He was gloriously saved ; then his old mother and father, two nieces, and two or three children were brought through his influence to surrender themselves to the service of Jesus Christ.

Six young men, who had behaved so badly in one of the Sunday school classes that the authorities were compelled to expel them, came to the mission, and were so mightily moved by the Holy Spirit that all of them confessed their sin and found peace, to the joy of those whom they had so often grieved.

Another man who had been a gambler, who was saved, had occasion to meet some of his old companions. They met him with, "Here comes one of Gipsy Smith's followers," in chorus. He replied, "Gentlemen, I was bold when I was against Christ; now I will be bold for Him," and so gained a great victory, and won their respect.

It was with many tender feelings we tore ourselves away from the people of East London. Many of the ministers and officials accompanied us on the tug to the *Armada* Castle, where we were received by Captain Robinson, the commodore of the Union Castle fleet, one of the saints of the earth, a man whose influence is known and felt for good by thousands who cross and re-cross with him every year. I found the Bishop of Burnley and a number of the English clergy on board, who had been over on the Mission of Help to the Anglican Church of South Africa. Some of them had attended my meetings. Among these brethren were Canon Thompson and the Rev. de Candole, Vicar of Holy Trinity, Cambridge. After dinner the bishop invited me to meet them

in conference. We had two very profitable hours in conversation on the work of God in South Africa. Lord Salisbury once said, in talking to politicians, "Study large maps." If this is good advice for politicians, I am sure it is good and sound for Christian workers. So we who had been working for the last six months out there amongst the crowds in South Africa, in the Anglican churches, and Nonconformist churches, and in public buildings, found we had very much in common when we came to close quarters; that nothing can lift men from sin but the old way of the Cross, and that nothing unites us like the love of Christ.

Early the next morning we heard the voice of the captain on the bridge, shouting, "Let go the anchor," and we knew we had reached Algoa Bay, Port Elizabeth, the scene of our last mission in this country. After breakfast we left the ship, with many good wishes from Captain Robinson, many of the passengers, and the crew. We found on the jetty quite a large gathering of friends to welcome us to Port Elizabeth. We were driven at once to the Town Hall, where, in the mayor's parlour, a

very hearty welcome was accorded us. But let the *Eastern Province Herald*, the Port Elizabeth morning paper, speak for itself—

“On behalf of the reception committee of the Free Church Council, the Rev. W. Dower extended a hearty welcome to the missionary and his family, and in a few words expressed the joy they had had at learning from time to time of the abundant harvest reaped throughout the land by the Gipsy. The campaign, it was understood, would close here, and the ministers had done all they could by way of preparation to create a spirit of enthusiasm and expectation, and now they were joyfully anticipating a rich harvest.”

When we came into close quarters with the people on the Saturday night in the large Feather-Market Hall, which was the biggest building we had in South Africa, we found them all alive, eager, and full of faith for the mission, and in full sympathy with the missionary. Sunday was stormy all day; but neither the wind nor rain kept the people away. We had a grand meeting in the afternoon; it was a time of close grips. At night the sight was a magnificent one. In spite of the falling rain,

there were 1600 or 1700 people, all on one floor, mostly men, "a huge market of souls." Not an easy place to speak in at all; very trying to the best of voices in the best of conditions, and to one who knows exactly how to use the voice, but still harder when the voice has been in hard work, as mine had, for over a year. The rooms which the council had to erect for inquiry work were a long way from the platform of the main audience room, which is always a difficulty. Still, the workers and stewards had been well trained, and were ready to make the best of a difficulty, and as soon as those who were convicted of sin began to move towards the inquiry-rooms, they were ready to go with them and help. A large number were found, at the close of the first day, on their knees, seeking pardon for past sin, and strength to live a better and a nobler life. Many went away home to do the same there. The first day's meetings assured us that God was with us, and that the last mission, like all the rest, would be crowned with the Divine blessing.

The congregations were made up of every



CHILDREN'S MEETING, PORT ELIZABETH.



Photo by]

DURBAN.

[N. P. Edwards.

class of the community, the mayor and family, the rich merchant and his employee—the extremes were there, and all those who go to make up the middle way from one end of the social scale to the other, many old friends, and some of my own spiritual children. One of the Congregational ministers here, and the one in whose charge were the inquiry-rooms, was converted years ago under the preaching of my dear old father. It was so cheering to find out in South Africa, in the Church life, some of its very pillars were brought to Christ in the missions we had the joy of conducting years ago in the home land. This was one of the joys of the campaign, to find so many of our own spiritual children amongst our best workers.

Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday the congregations grew in numbers and power. Wednesday night the crowd was a mighty one, every seat filled, and many at the far end standing. The sea of upturned faces was very thrilling. My daughter and I sang “When my life’s work is ended” to our dear friend Jude’s setting, and every heart was moved, tears were falling everywhere, the silence was intense. A

lady said at the close, "I do not know whether the song or the sermon moved me most. One thing I know, whereas I was hard and cold, and full of the world, I went home a new creature." This was truly a moving service, and hundreds must have found power to live a new life. The leading people from the suburbs were there, mixing with the very poor, and many of the natives with their faces shining like ebony. In the inquiry-room they were all represented, and the power of the Lord was present to heal all who came. It was a great joy to see the ministers and workers rejoicing with and over those deciding for Christ, for whom they had worked and prayed so long. This is part of my wages. Sometimes I have thought my joy as great as the faithful pastor's, or that of the dear old father or mother or consecrated Sunday school teacher, though I may have had very little to do really with the actual decision. Yet to see the joy of these, and the glad tears falling, kissed into jewels by their smiles, is one of the privileges of the reaper. Some reap, others sow ; but to gather and garner is, and must ever be, the object of the Church.

During the mission the day for renewing and granting new licences fell due. The council knew of three or four new licences for which application was being made, to which strong opposition was to be given. For two nights we had special prayer in the meetings that the opposition which the council would make might be effective. On Wednesday the ministers and those in sympathy with them turned up in strong force in the court, and after a tough fight we—I say we, because I was there, and I was interested, because God's business in South Africa, or anywhere else, is my business—we won a glorious victory, and *not one* of the new applications was granted, thanks to the magistrate and the chief constable. At night we sang the Doxology with glad hearts for a victory which means much for the youth of the town.

The mayor and his family were with us night by night, and so were many of the most influential people, socially and commercially, in the town. Many of the cultured, as well as the most ignorant, came to Christ, some who had lived most degraded lives, as well as those who, like the young ruler, only lacked the one thing.

Three husbands sent a note of thanksgiving that their wives had all been converted, and some of the young people had followed the example of mother. A cultured young widow—a Roman Catholic—on her way home from India, where she had just buried her husband, and who died trusting Jesus for salvation, called at this port for a few days. She was found in the inquiry-room saying to a lady worker, “I must be saved before I get home. I cannot face my husband’s mother without being able to tell her her prayers are answered. She prayed for her boy and for me; he died so happy. The priest, Rome, mass, and the crucifix have not and cannot satisfy me. I must have Jesus.” She went home rejoicing in the knowledge of acceptance in Him. Close to her knelt an intelligent boy of about ten, and when the worker asked if he knew what coming to Jesus meant, answered, “Yes, I do. I know I want to be saved, because I have been cheating at school over my lessons, and I know that is not right.”

A young man attended all the meetings at East London, and did not give himself to

Christ, although he knew he ought, and really wished to do so, but his sin held him back. When the mission was over he became so absolutely miserable and restless that he came on to Port Elizabeth, and as soon as he got into the hall he asked for me, and said, "I am going to be saved this night. I have come on purpose all the way from East London." The child of many prayers ; may he be kept !

The editor of the leading paper told me that the whole tone and attitude of the city had changed from indifference and criticism to one of inquiry and sympathy, and that in the bank, warehouse, store, office, market, 'change, tram, and street, as well as around the table, in the home circle, and in the club, the one topic of conversation was the mission, and that Christians were expected to talk to those whom they met about the things of the kingdom of God. All this was great gain, and gave the workers an opportunity they had never had before. One, who had been greatly wronged, wrote to say, "Will you please rejoice with me, for God has given me a great victory and peace ? I have been filled with revenge for years towards a

man who took from me, while a mere child, all a woman holds dear. I have hated him, and my life has been nothing but bitterness in consequence ; but in this mission I have felt my sin, and God has been so good, and taken it all away, and now I can forgive and pity." A daughter wrote, " We, as a family, owe you so much, for you have, under God, given us back a father who was *practically dead* to us all for years ; in fact, we did not know what had become of him, but we have him home again with us, saved, clothed, and in his right mind. The dead is alive ; the lost is found. This has come to us when we had all given up hope, and had even ceased to pray. Your name will always be dear to every member of our family. God bless you ! "

The following letter came from a distance of over two hundred miles : " I have read your book and reports of your work in South Africa with the greatest interest, and whether it is reading your life, or the fact that I know Hanley, where you spent so much of your time, or whether it is the Holy Spirit striving with me, prompting me to see you, I cannot

tell ; but I must see you. If you will reply by the enclosed telegram form, I will come. Do give me an interview, dear sir, for my soul is hungry for God. Do help me if you can."

Needless to say, he came, and the dear fellow went back to his wife and family a new man ; one of the most delightful cases of conversion I have seen for a long time.

A telegram, bringing a request for prayer, came nearly four hundred miles, and also containing a request for praise for blessing, as the direct result of prayer, offered in a former mission ; so the back-wash of the tide was felt all over South Africa. Glory to God !

One of the finest young men in the city sent this message : "God has been pleased to use and bless your words to my soul. It has been good to be led to think of Gethsemane, Calvary, and of the heart-breaking agonies of the Man of Sorrows, the resurrection, and the glorious hope of all those who accept the pardon offered through Him. You have made me think and ponder these things anew, and my heart has been softened, and, with many others, can say, my burden is gone, and Jesus saves me now."

A lady, who had not been to church for years, and had just lived for the world—"God was not," she said, "in all my thoughts; I had forgotten Him"—was brought back to the fold of God, and is rejoicing greatly.

Many more cases of this kind might be given, for they abound. Let me give one or two more.

A business man who holds a good position, and who, years ago, was an earnest Christian, got wrong, awfully wrong, and had a sad story of sin to tell. He came to see me, broken all to pieces. He gave up all the things which had been his hindrances, abandoned every evil thing. "But," he said, "I have wronged my wife so terribly, and she has said she would never forgive me, and if she keeps her word, I deserve it all; but how can I live unless she will forgive, if not forget, the past?" I undertook to see the wife, and away I went at once and asked for an interview, which she readily granted. I found she had been to the mission, and was under very tender impressions. I told her of her husband's conversion; she listened with tears of gratitude and joy. Then I told

her there was one thing which would help to keep him and make his joy possible, and that was her forgiveness. Was she willing to give it? She said, "As soon as he comes home to-day, I will throw my arms around his neck, and tell him I can and do freely forgive him, and will never remind him of the past again. How can I do less, for last night God forgave me my sin, and now has answered my prayers?" I came away, saying, "This day has salvation come to this house."

One wrote, "I spent the whole of September 3 in prayer for eight friends who were laid on my heart. During the mission I have had the joy of seeing them all joyously converted."

The young people's meeting was a very gracious one. About twelve hundred young people "over nine and under twenty," and a few old-fashioned twenties got in somehow. My daughter, who was an untold help to me in this campaign, spoke helpful and faithful words to them, and God blessed the word. Three hundred and fifty gave themselves to Jesus. The sight was a beautiful one—no better this side the gates of pearl. Many of

these young lives will be kept sweet and pure, and made useful in the home, the Church, and the world, as the result of these meetings and talks specially for them. Then young folks die, too. A sad father wrote me. His letter is before me, telling me of his "dear, sweet little Winnie," only ten. She came to see me with her mother when the mission was on in her city. Her father bears an honoured name, having served his country well in a very high office for over forty years. A few days after she had been in the inquiry-room and given herself to God, she sickened with small-pox. Everything that could be done for her was done; but, alas! she knew she was dying. She told her sorrowing father and mother she was going to be with Jesus; and then she thought she heard the angels calling, and she answered, "Yes, I am here. I am Winnie F——. I am one of Gipsy Smith's little converts." So dear little Winnie has gone home; but how comforted her mother and father are to know that she had such a sweet sense of the presence of Jesus in her last moments. There will be thousands of young people who will

date their conversion to God from this mission in South Africa ; for we made an honest attempt to reach and win them, and everywhere the meeting specially for them was the most hopeful ; we have lived long enough to know prevention is better than cure.

The gospel temperance meeting was one of the best in all my experience. A splendid congregation, full of enthusiasm and fire, caught every point made, and did not forget to show how much they were in full sympathy with the object of the meeting. Many of the right sort were in there, just the men we wanted to reach. I was greatly helped in speaking. I had the women—mothers, wives, and sisters—and the little children in my mind, and, oh ! how I tried to plead in their name and in my Lord's name that we should take the right attitude with regard to the drink. And, oh ! the joy of it. Six hundred came and took the pledge, "For Christ's sake, for my weak brother's sake, and for my own sake." This is our motto. I question if ever there has been a better gospel temperance meeting in South Africa.

The last Sunday was a red-letter day. We had been looking forward to it, and praying that the last Sunday of the campaign might be one of the greatest days we had known. Our prayers were not in vain ; they were heard and answered. A lovely day, a typical African sky, God's own smile on His own beautiful Nature—it seemed as if land and sea were kissed into song and gladness, and joined with the vast multitudes who came to crowd the Feather-Market Hall, afternoon and night, in singing—

“ Praise, my soul, the King of Heaven ;
To His feet thy tribute bring ;
Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,
Who like thee His praise should sing ?
Praise Him ! praise Him !
Praise the everlasting King.”

The singing of this song rose and rose until it seemed to many of us that, if we had not got into the third heaven, we had reached the place where God comes among men to save, to pardon, to ennoble, to give strength to work and fight life's battles for Him, to set up our banners in His Name, and help Him to save our brother for whom Christ died. The great

crowds, both afternoon and night, felt they were under the power of the Holy Spirit. The honest and faithful preaching of the week had told, and now the heart and mind were yielding to the call of God. How quickly the inquiry-rooms were filled, and how joyful the work of leading broken hearts to the Lamb of God ! No one will ever know how much was done on this day, nor how many gave themselves to Jesus Christ. But we do know that two hundred and thirty were honestly dealt with personally, and were committed to God in prayer by ministers and godly men and women. Only the great day will reveal all the results of this day. It was like the great day, "the last day of the feast, when Jesus stood and cried, 'If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink.' " When the Benediction was pronounced, the people still lingered. They were slow to leave the place where so much blessing had come to them and theirs.

The night when I gave my life story, the crowd was a record one for Port Elizabeth. Every section of society, that which spells itself with a capital S and that which does not, was

to be found in the hall, all eager to listen to the story of God's mighty power in saving and transforming the Gipsy tent. The mayor presided, and here is his speech. I give it because it is typical of the gratitude felt by all the best people of South Africa to the National Free Church Council for sending their missionary to their country—

“I have seen many things during my mayoralty, but none more pleasing than this. This great gathering speaks for itself. It fittingly crowns the great and wonderful assemblies of the past week. You have been listening to the message which Mr. Gipsy Smith brought to Port Elizabeth, and now you want to know more of himself and his extraordinary career from the gipsy tent to the pulpit. I will not say that I am here to introduce Mr. Smith to you—he has introduced himself; he couldn't help it. His life so grandly illustrates the power of the Gospel which he preaches. But I will say that in your name I heartily welcome him, and ask him to tell us his story—to tell it all. He has given us in the services of the mission little bits, as he said, to whet our appetite; now we want the bulk, and no doubt it will be as good as the sample—like the famous clothes-pegs. We ought all to be grateful for what this mission has brought. The Free Church Federation of Great Britain has done us a

great service in giving of its best to strengthen the moral and spiritual influences at work in South Africa, and our City Evangelical Church Council have done well, by their energetic arrangements on a vast scale, to ensure the success which has attended their united action, and to create throughout the Eastern Province an interest in this mission. One cannot help seeing great influences from such a tour as Mr. Gipsy Smith brings to a close in Port Elizabeth. It strengthens all our dearest ties with the old homeland. Fiscal ties are good ; ties of sentiment are better ; but the ties of our great Evangelical Faith are best, and perhaps strongest of all. Gipsy Smith is a link in the golden chain of our Imperial unity. Again, we have been glad to see in all the cities and colonies of South Africa how this mission has brought all kinds of people together ; it has helped to that unity with which our prosperity is so closely bound up. I understand that large numbers of men, women, and children, of all ranks of life, have been brought together to hear Mr. Smith, and we are confident that the influences they have carried away into their homes are for good. Whatever helps to a higher tone of civic life is a public boon, and, whatever critics may say, the Gipsy Smith Mission can have done harm to nobody. Because of his career at home, and in other South African cities, Mr. Smith began with a place in our interest ; he closes his mission with a place in the hearts of most of us, I am sure. As timber merchant, gipsy, and apostle,

his life story must be full of incident and wonder ; and I will now ask him to tell it."

The final meeting took place on the Tuesday, September 13, which took the form of a "praise meeting." Most of the ministers had something to say of the widespread blessing which had resulted from the mission. "Some wonderful things have come to pass," said one. "One hundred and twenty people wish to join my church, out of those who have given themselves to Christ," said another. "Every section of the community has been touched, and the blessing has been felt by the most unlikely, and those are coming to us whom we never expected," said a third. "I am a better man, and shall be a better pastor, and my people will know it," said a fourth. These are samples of the words uttered. This meeting was a fitting end to a grand mission. Over a thousand people had recorded their decision to live for God, and nearly seven hundred had signed the temperance pledge.

To our God I commit them all. He is able to keep them from falling, and to present them faultless before the Father.



JOHANNESBURG CYCLE BRIGADE ADVERTISING THE MISSION.

CHAPTER XII

FAREWELL TO SOUTH AFRICA

WE had a great send-off from Port Elizabeth on September 17, when we embarked on the *Walmer Castle* for home. Large numbers were at the jetty, though we were compelled to go aboard much earlier than had been announced, on account of the weather and the rough state of the bay. Hundreds who would have been there were thus disappointed, as we left the jetty at eleven o'clock, instead of three, the advertised time. But this only made many the more anxious to get a last look and word, so several small tugs were busy from twelve to four in bringing crowds to and from the ship to bid us God-speed on our journey.

Cape Town was reached on the morning of the 19th. We were very glad of the two days'

break, and of the two delightful meetings which had been arranged for us on Monday and Tuesday. The building chosen for the meetings was crowded, over an hour before time, with a great number of converts and friends. The first meeting was presided over by Rev. H. Cotton, Wesleyan minister. At this meeting I gave an address to the converts, who are still bright and working splendidly. Some beautiful stories were told me, which time had made manifest, of the good done during the mission six months before, and of its abiding results.

A young man gave himself to Christ who some time before had purchased a cycle on the instalment system. He took away the machine, but only paid a few amounts. The day after his conversion, he went off to the man from whom he had the cycle, and told him he had brought it back, because he did not see his way to pay anything further, and he felt it would not be honest to keep it any longer. The man said, "What has made you bring it back now?" "Oh!" said the newly converted man, "I have been to hear

Gipsy Smith, and he told us it was not enough to go to church, to sing hymns, and say a few prayers, but that being a Christian meant doing right, being honest and true, and living so that God can smile upon us ; and as I have made up my mind to follow Jesus, God helping me, I cannot keep your cycle without paying for it, and so I have brought it back." And wishing him good day, he left him standing in his store, thinking. The man thought and looked at the bicycle, and of the brave words of the young man who had just left him. He tried hard to shake them off, but they had come to stay. All day he was bothered, till at last he said, "I will go and hear this Gipsy for myself." He came, and the Word convinced him of sin, and that night, or soon after, he was converted. He at once sent for the young man, saying he wanted to see him. When he came, he said, "It is my turn now ; I am converted, and I, too, must do right. I cannot keep the instalments you paid me. I have the machine back, and it is as good as new. Here is your money, for I cannot keep what is not mine by right." They rejoiced in their

new-found joy together, giving glory to God for saving them by His grace.

The workers told me of homes which had been transformed ; drunkards sober and praying ; mothers who were worldly and flighty now living for Christ and their homes. A testimony reached me from an important officer in the army, who said that whenever the soldiers had been able to attend the mission, its influence had been seen and felt right through the regiment.

A man in a good position, with decent surroundings, but whose weakness was the drink, came to the first meeting, which happened to be on a Saturday. He had been in the habit of getting drunk every Saturday for years. He left his home on Saturday evenings with that intention ; he seemed to think it was the proper thing to do. At this first meeting he was very much impressed. That week he never missed a meeting. The second Saturday he came again, and went home that night for the second time quite sober. When the young people's meeting came, he borrowed a badge from a worker so that he might gain admittance, and although

he had not yet given himself to Christ, he said, "I will be a steward ; only let me come. I cannot miss any word of this mission." He was in earnest, and before the end of the mission he was saved from the power of the drink, and he has never touched it since. He has become a good worker in the Sunday school, and a blessing in the home and in the business.

A good story came from one of the fashionable clubs. Several members were talking in the smoke-room. One said, "Where is B—— ? I have not seen or heard of him this week."

"Ah !" said a second ; "and there was no bridge-party at his house this week. I had an intimation by post that there would be no more weekly bridge-parties at his house."

"How is that ?" chimed two or three in chorus.

"Oh," said one, who knew him well, "he went into the inquiry-room at Gipsy Smith's Mission, and he is converted, and, of course, there will be an end of those things."

After a long silence, one member of the

party said, "B—— is right ; he will have the best of it in this world, as well as in the next. It would be a good thing for us if we took the same stand. Good night, gentlemen."

The head of a large school for boys told me that he had thirty-five fine youths trying to live the Christian life, who were brought to God in the mission.

One pastor told me that he had 140 names, given to him at the close of the mission, of those who had professed conversion and wished to join his church. They lived so far apart, that he felt he could not visit them all without waste of time and energy. So he appointed two days during which he would be in his vestry to see them. Then he circularized every one whose name had been passed on to him. He sat from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., with only a break for lunch. During that time he had a steady stream both days. He never had to wait for any one ; they had to wait their turn for him. There were about twelve whose names had reached him by mistake, and some few were doubtful. "But," said he, "I can account for *one hundred and twenty-three to-day.*"

And, remember, this was six months after the mission was held. The good shepherd always has a flock.

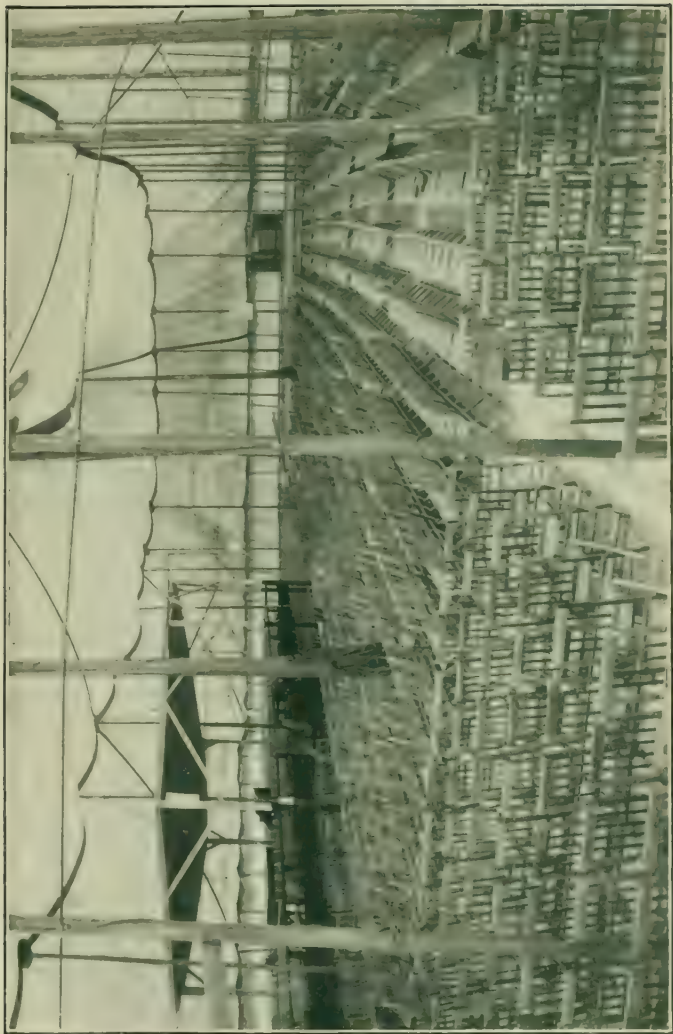
An office-bearer from another church wrote, "We had a splendid testimony meeting last week ; we could have gone on all night. One after another gladly gave their testimony, until at last we had to adjourn the meeting till the following week. Our pastor sat in his vestry all day Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday following the mission for the purpose of interviewing all who had professed faith in Christ and wished to join our church. Over one hundred came to see him, and many others who could not come wrote, saying, they were all right, and wished to become candidates for Church membership. The mission is still talked of by the man in the street, and never were our churches so full as now. Our week night prayer-meetings are filled, and on Sunday evenings we have to find more room for the people who come. Hundreds of prayers ascend daily for you from our town."

Another church has added over two hundred to its membership as the result of the mission,

and still the work is going on. Several social missions have been started as the direct result of the mission. The leader of a Good Templar lodge told me that every lodge in Cape Town had almost doubled its membership, and that he had started a new lodge with sixty members. This is lasting testimony to the gospel temperance meetings.

All these things were most cheering, and proved that the mission was not all excitement or emotion, but that a deep work of grace had taken place in many lives.

On the Tuesday, Mr. W. Cuthbert, the President of the Y.M.C.A., and one of the most worthy laymen in South Africa, had arranged to take a party of us up Table Mountain. We were off early and reached Constantia Nek, and began our climb at eight o'clock. The day was perfect, and the party all in good spirits and health. We had a delightful climb, and were charmed with the growth of heather on the mountain. There are over one hundred varieties of heather. The winding path gave so many peeps full of beauty to one who loves Nature. Halfway up,



INTERIOR OF TENT USED FOR THE MISSIONS AT JOHANNISBURG AND PRETORIA.

standing out on a piece of rock overlooking Cape Town, were three raebucks, with the pure blue sky as a background. Here, two thousand feet above the town, we halted for breakfast, provisions having been sent on ahead of us by mules and natives. After climbing that distance, we were not sorry to find our morning meal all ready and waiting for us, and we all did justice to it. After breakfast and a look round, we continued our climbing. The last bit of the journey is by far the most difficult. At ten minutes to one we stood on the top overlooking the city, away above "Lion's Head," "Devil's Peak," and the "Twelve Apostles," and far away in the distance the Hex River Mountains, through which the Government Railway runs, here and there capped with snow. And halfway up these mountains there lay a strip of pure white cloud, making the mountain-peaks look all the blacker, as they stood out clear against the skyline. It is impossible to describe the grandeur and beauty of Table Mountain, with its flowers and trees growing on its slopes; the oak, poplar, blue gum, and the silver trees, together with its one hundred

varieties of heather. Here we could have lingered, but time would not allow ; we had to descend again, and get back to Cape Town for our final meeting. By 4 p.m. we had reached the bottom, having covered what would be equal on level ground to twenty-five miles, so we were told. One of the friends who accompanied us (indeed, he acted as guide, Mr. Munich, of Wynburg) went up that day for the two hundred and sixty-first time. One can readily understand the desire there must be to go again, after having once stood at the top, nearly four thousand feet high.

Our last meeting in South Africa was announced for eight o'clock. Two hours before the time great throngs of people were streaming to the church, and as soon as the doors were open the building was simply packed in every nook and corner—corridor, aisles, lobbies, and windows.

Telegrams and letters were read from every centre visited. Rev. E. Baker spoke for Cape Town ; Mr. Drew, editor of the *Friend*, spoke for Bloemfontein, and said that he had never seen such a sudden switching-off, on the part

of the public, from the mere ordinary affairs of everyday life to higher concerns. He said it was worth while for any journalist to write up the good work of the mission. He had given a very prominent place to the mission in the columns of his paper. Rev. James Richardson spoke for East London, and referred in glowing terms to the results of the mission in his town. He said that a prominent hotel-keeper in East London had asked him if Gipsy Smith had gone. He replied, "Yes; he left this afternoon." To which the other replied, "There are a great many people waiting below to tar and feather him." Then Mr. Richardson added, "Mr. Smith will get his feathers above, where they are awaiting him."

Rev. Mr. Francis spoke for Port Elizabeth, especially thanking the National Free Church Council for sending their missionary to South Africa.

To describe the deep feeling of this last meeting is beyond me, or, indeed, anybody else. It was the parting of children from their father, but we do hope to meet again some day; and whenever that day comes I know there will be

a warm welcome from thousands in South Africa.

Wednesday, September 21, we sailed from Cape Town for home, but not before a vast crowd had gathered at the docks to say farewell, and to sing many of the mission hymns, including "God be with you till we meet again." As the ship began to glide from the dock, a great shout of "God bless you" and "Come back again soon" reached our very hearts from hundreds of those who are, and will be for ever, dear to us. While the pocket-handkerchiefs were waving, the ship's band caught the spirit of the moment, and struck up "Auld lang syne." That was as much as we could bear just then, and some of us went below.

The journey home was not very eventful. We had only about sixty first-class passengers, and the same number second and third. Life on board can be very monotonous except you mix up with the crowd and do as they do—gamble on the runnings of the ship and play cards. Some do the latter from morning till night, and somehow to me it did seem mockery to play bridge, whist, and dance well into

Saturday night, and then go to early Communion on Sunday morning. It is no use ; I could not encourage the one if the people would do the other. But when leaders do this, what can you expect of those who follow ? There were six or eight clergymen returning from the Mission of Help, amongst them the Rev. H. G. Bainbridge, of Westminster Abbey, and the Rev. A. B. M. Lillingston, who had just been called to Holy Trinity, Hull ; also the Rev. C. Bickersteth, of the Community of the Resurrection, Mirfield, Yorkshire, with whom I had several very interesting conversations. They were greatly delighted in the success of my work, and invited me to go to see them. The last named invited me to go to speak to the men in the institute at Mirfield. The last Sunday at sea I was asked to preach. I gladly consented. At 8.15 p.m. the passengers and crew, with many officers, all gathered on the afterwell deck. We chose hymns that were well known, and Sir Walter Parratt presided at the piano. The people sang grandly, and how sailors love to sing an old hymn which they learned in childhood ! I have often found an

old hymn is like a gimlet before the sermon. We had a most impressive service, and the next days many little sidelights revealed that good had been done.

How eagerly we watched and longed for Saturday, October 8 ! I was looking forward to it with as much delight as a boy coming home for his holiday. Long before it was daylight I was looking out of the porthole to see if land were in sight. At last we sighted the Needles. Soon all was excitement and movement. How we strained our eyes for sight of some familiar face while the ship was being docked ! At last we saw some whom we knew—Mr. Percy Bright, of Bournemouth ; Mr. Hirst, chief of our staff ; and the editor, Mr. H. D. Williams, who came with loving greeting from all the Church Council. At Waterloo quite a little bevy of friends awaited our arrival, including Rev. Thomas Law. How good it was to see them after all the wandering of the past months ! We reached Romany Tan, our own dear little home, at last, and could not help but thank our Father, who had put His sheltering wings about us and preserved us

FAREWELL TO SOUTH AFRICA 175

from all illness and danger on a journey of 16,000 miles. "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost."

Our welcome meeting on October 12 in Exeter Hall was a great one, crowded from end to end with a host of friends delighted to see us. The Free Churches of Cambridge gave us a welcome home in Hills Road Wesleyan Church on the 18th. Cambridge need never be ashamed of that meeting ; it was quite equal to the London gathering in enthusiasm and spiritual power, and would have been as large but for the size of the building.

CHAPTER XIII

RETROSPECT

THE mission is over, and here, 6000 miles away from Africa and its people, away from all its excitement and rush, I am able to think carefully of the events of those six months. The more this is done, the more wonderful does it all appear, and I can but magnify the power and presence of God in using one so poor and unworthy. This mission is God's modern miracle in South Africa, and only in that way can it be explained. God is still working in the hearts of men, turning them from darkness to light, and from sin to grace. "This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes."

Mind you, going just when I did, at a time when there was much controversy about the

introduction of Chinese labour, with the Non-conformists of England and the majority of professing Christians of South Africa very much divided upon the subject, things were not easy. The English were shouting "slavery," and the Colonials asking of the English, "What do you know about the conditions and needs of South Africa? We, who are on the spot, know better than you can, 6000 miles away, and we are fellow-Christians. Give us credit for having a conscience as well as yourselves. The people at home have no monopoly of the article called conscience." I had to walk very circumspectly, and watch my words, so that nothing should be said which might be construed into political bias, my one purpose being peace, and not strife. One of the last things said to me before leaving Southampton, by one who came to see me off, was this: "Mind and tell the people in South Africa what *we think* about *slavery*." The topic of conversation on the boat was all the same—"John Chinaman," and the arguments for and against his going to the mines. As soon as we landed, among the first questions

put by one very good, earnest man, who stood by me in every conceivable way, and was a tower of strength throughout the whole mission, was the following : "Why do the leaders at home think we are all backsliders out here ? Why should they not give us credit for doing what we think is best for the moment for the good of the country ?" My answer to these questions was, "I have not come to South Africa to discuss its politics, but to preach the gospel of peace, and I will not be drawn into its quarrels, nor be catechised as to its conflicts, or be held responsible for the words of those from whom you differ. I have come as the friend of all, and the enemy of none ; my purpose is to bring men together, and not to separate them. Help me to do this, and do not entangle me with any yoke of bondage." This attitude was respected from that moment. I determined to know no politics, no race difference, and no colour line. I treated all alike—British, Boer, and native. Had I taken sides with any particular party, my influence would have been lessened, and some would not have been reached who were brought into loving spiritual

fellowship with those who had been political opponents. Around the Cross there is no room to fight ; we cannot fall out there.

At the very beginning of my work in Cape Town, the question whether it would be wise to expect the coloured people to attend the mission in the ordinary way with the white people, or whether we should arrange separate meetings for them, came up for discussion. Some friends thought, and said, "The two would never mix." This feeling was strongly expressed by the ministers of the coloured people, both of whom were white men. They requested me to give two closing nights of the mission for the coloured people only. This request I strongly resented, because it was against my judgment, and I told them if they made eighteen nights for the white man, and two for the coloured, they would draw a line and create a feeling that ought not to exist when we preach the gospel. I was told that I did not know South Africa and its people as they did, and that I ought to consider their experience and longer knowledge of the conditions and difficulties. As I did not wish to

appear stupid, I said, "Brethren, if it be the wish of the committee to act on the suggestion of these pastors of the coloured people, I will bow to its decision; but it is against my judgment, and I must signal my protest in this way." As soon as the decision of the committee was made known, correspondence opened in the papers. Questions of this kind were put: Is there one God for the whites, and one for the blacks? Is there one heaven for the blacks, and one for the whites? One coloured Christian, in a very polite letter, and speaking for his brothers, said, "We have been looking forward to the visit of Gipsy Smith, God's servant, praying and working and looking for the answer to our prayers in the conversion of our loved ones. Why should we be shut out of the mission and its blessing? Surely we need the mission. Some of us are very keen about it, and it will be a great grief to us if we may not come." To these letters I replied by saying that the committee had acted at the suggestion of the pastors, who were set aside specially to work among the coloured people. If they wished to attend the mission

in the ordinary way, the doors would be open for all, and that I should be delighted to see them there. What was the result? They came in hundreds, and a section of the building was taken possession of by them every night. There was an inquiry-room especially set aside for them; workers who understood them were appointed to deal with them, and every attention given; and four hundred out of the three thousand who professed conversion in the first mission were coloured people. After this there was no more question about the mixing of the races; black and white were made one at the feet of Jesus.

I wish to pay a tribute of gratitude to the faithful men who are doing noble work for Christ in the Churches of South Africa. To mention names, and to particularize, would take a volume larger than this is meant to be; but I should feel myself lacking in brotherliness if I did not say in this permanent way that everywhere the ministers vied with each other to make my way easy by doing the work of preparation thoroughly, and my success was made possible because of the splendid work

they had put into the field before I entered it. When I had once arrived in their midst, they all sought to do me honour, and stood by me as a brother beloved. They were willing and anxious to help me in every little detail of the mission. Day by day they were at my service, and rejoiced in the success of every meeting ; and I am quite sure that these godly men will do all that men can do to keep what has been given them by the Lord of the harvest until He comes. It was such a delight to see them having their hearts made glad, with a joy which cannot be put into words, when numbers of their own flock, and those in whom they were specially interested, came to Christ. Again and again I have said to such, "You, my brother, brought these people to the threshold, and God has used me to bring them over. Now, you try to keep them inside the fold, and some day we will rejoice together." I believe some of the ministers of South Africa will live longer, because they have seen some of the fruits of their labours ; nothing helps a man to live like the joy of victory. I know some churches, where, if the pastors could only see a great work

of grace, the bringing of a few hundreds to Jesus for pardon and salvation, they would be young again. But the conditions are wrong, and will have to change if conversions are to take place. These same so-called churches would hinder Paul if he came to preach ; indeed, they would bind the Son of God Himself. I am not surprised they kill the honest-toiling pastor. I have known other churches, where, if an evangelist came along, how they would help and support him ! To such churches let me say with all the power of my being, stand by, help, support, pray for, and work with your own pastor as you do the evangelist, and you will see results under his preaching, for he preaches the same gospel. If you believe it, act your faith.

In Cape Town, the Orange River Colony, the Transvaal, and Natal, we were received by enthusiastic crowds. There was no abatement anywhere in the enthusiasm ; it became more intense as the days passed. Every mission added fuel to the fire ; each fresh victory made the next place all the more eager. For the time being there was nothing else in the field ; the mission was the all-absorbing topic, about which

the people talked, and to which they came. Its songs caught on, and comic songs had to give way to "Count your blessings." It was whistled by the men, hummed by the boys, and sung by the women, all day long. From one end of South Africa to the other, it is agreed that the country never was so stirred before; there had never been a movement of grace which commanded the attention of the whole people as this. From the highest to the lowest, rich and poor, the millionaire and the beggar alike, sat and listened to the old gospel story; and some of the richest men not only came to the meetings, but invited me to lunch with them, and showed me every kindness. They were most interested in my work, and I am confident, had there been any need, these men would have been most ready to have given of their wealth to pay for the expenses of the mission. But for this there was no need; in every case the mission paid its own way.

The work among the young people is the most hopeful of all. It is a great thing to save an old man, but it is a far greater thing to save a boy. There are thousands of young people

in South Africa who will never forget the meetings specially set aside for them, and of the day when they gave their young lives to Christ. They are to make the future history of their country ; they will be the men and women who, in the days to come, will make its laws, mould its thought, and live its life. In winning them for Christ and the Church, it means they will be better business men, better statesmen, better scholars, and better citizens.

In this part of my work my daughter was of great assistance, and I am sure that she will be remembered in the lives of many young people to whom she spoke during this tour. And she could speak to the youngest who came, for she definitely gave herself to the Lord when she was seven years old, and she has never gone back on that real act of coming to Jesus, though she was so young. Her brother came when he was between nine and ten, and he is preaching Christ to-day. Oh, if we could be ten minutes ahead of the devil with every child in the land ! What a world of sin and sorrow we should prevent ! God help the Church to save the children !

The number of people who attended the mission in the aggregate would be considerably over 300,000. When you think of the population of the towns visited, this is tremendous. Those who were personally dealt with amounted to 16,000 or 20,000 ; but these figures do not tabulate all the results. All will never be known here, for there is so much that cannot be written down. It seemed, in some places, again and again, as though everybody in the building were seeking God—silently, penitently, but surely turning to God. Ah ! those were epoch-making moments, when joys were created that will make heaven pulsate with hallelujahs ; moments in which angels, listening over the battlements of the skies, heard the snapping of chains and the bursting of prison doors, and shouted for joy as they saw men and women, who had been slaves so long, made free ! We do not know all, and we do not wish to know. God knows all them that are His, and when they gather from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south, and we all join in the song of Moses and the Lamb, we may know too. Till then, may the converts

and the Christians of South Africa, with whom we had such sweet fellowship, be kept by the grace that saved !

I have now but one or two words more to say. This wonderful mission in South Africa is one of the most surprising chapters in my life. I have seen nothing like it anywhere in the world. The campaign, from beginning to end, seems to me to be a Divine arrangement. From the first day of the first mission in Cape Town to the last in Port Elizabeth not a hitch, not a cross word ; no unpleasantness in any committee or with any particular worker, so far as I know. Every man, from first to last, seemed to forget self, and lay his all at the feet of Christ and the service of his brother. Nothing was too small to attend to, or too big to attempt. Never was there more concentration or consecration in any bit of work that I have ever seen. Personally, and for my dear ones who were with me, I cannot thank the people of South Africa too much. They treated us too well, and we shall want to see them all again some day. They will never be forgotten, or creep out of our hearts. We

shall always count it one of the privileges of our lives that we visited the Churches of South Africa, but sorry always that we had not the power to serve them better.

God save South Africa ! Amen.

THE END

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